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GRILLED CHICKEN WITH QUINOA GREEK SALAD



Ingredients

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- 25g Butter
- 1 Red Chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 Garlic Clove, crushed
- 400g Chicken mini fillets
- 1½ Tablespoons Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
- 300g Vine Tomatoes, roughly chopped
- Handful pitted black Kalamata Olives
- 1 Red Onion, finely sliced
- 100g Feta Cheese, crumbled
- Small bunch of Mint Leaves, chopped
- ½ Lime Juice and Zest
- 1 Lebanese Cucumber, coarsely chopped

Method

1. Cook the Quinoa following the pack instructions, then rinse in cold water and drain thoroughly.
2. Meanwhile, mix the butter, chilli and garlic into a paste. Toss the chicken fillets in 2 tablespoons of olive oil with some seasoning.
3. Lay chicken in a hot griddle pan and cook for 3-4 minutes each side or until cooked through.
4. Transfer to a plate and dot with the spicy butter paste and set aside to melt.
5. Mix the tomatoes, olives, onion, feta and mint into a bowl. Toss in the cooked quinoa. Stir through the remaining olive oil, lime juice and zest, and season well. Serve with the chicken fillets and Cucumber on top, drizzled with any buttery chicken juices.

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Joe Manganiello

Photograph by Dustin Snipes

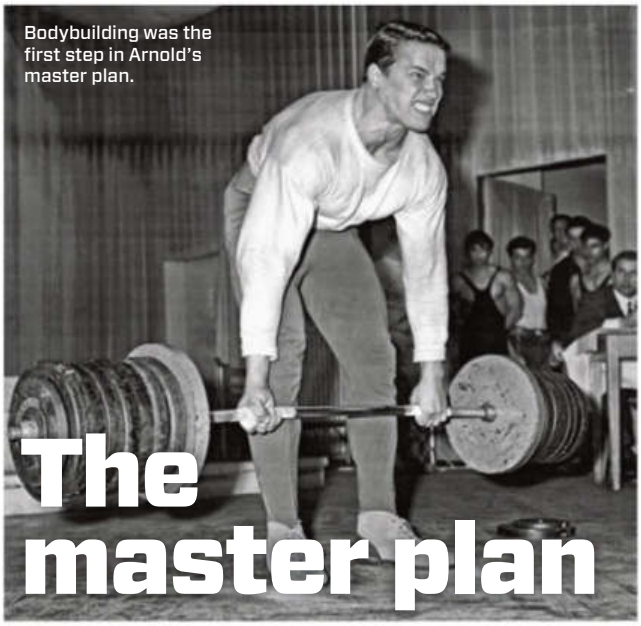


"I WAS THE ONE WHO COULDN'T DO ONE DIP OR ONE PULL-UP."

– Joe Manganiello, p46

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Bodybuilding was the first step in Arnold's master plan.

The master plan

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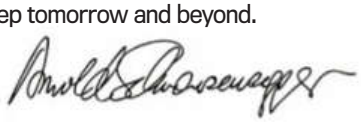
Q: Aside from hard work and visualisation, what does it take to be successful?
- FRANKIE, VIA FACEBOOK

A: YOU NEED TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN. I didn't start out in my teens telling myself I was going to star in the *Terminator* movies. But I did know that I wanted to be a movie star, a businessman and a political leader. Of course, with my humble background, people thought that was nuts.

So I asked myself, "What's one thing I can do that I'm good at that can serve those goals?" – no matter how indirectly. The answer seemed even stranger than my goals: body-building. Still, I reasoned that having muscles would give me confidence, get me noticed and pave the way for me to come to America where I could make it all come true. Once I'd made it in bodybuilding, breaking into movies playing became easier. I was also right in thinking that after playing a hero on-screen for so long and building a following, I had the power to help people on a grand scale in real life, getting elected as governor.

This year, *Terminator: Genisys* came out, proving that my plan is still working. So remember this: you don't have to know exactly how you'll get what you want in life, but you do need to ask yourself what you can do today that can help you take the next step tomorrow and beyond.

Yours in iron,



Arnold Schwarzenegger

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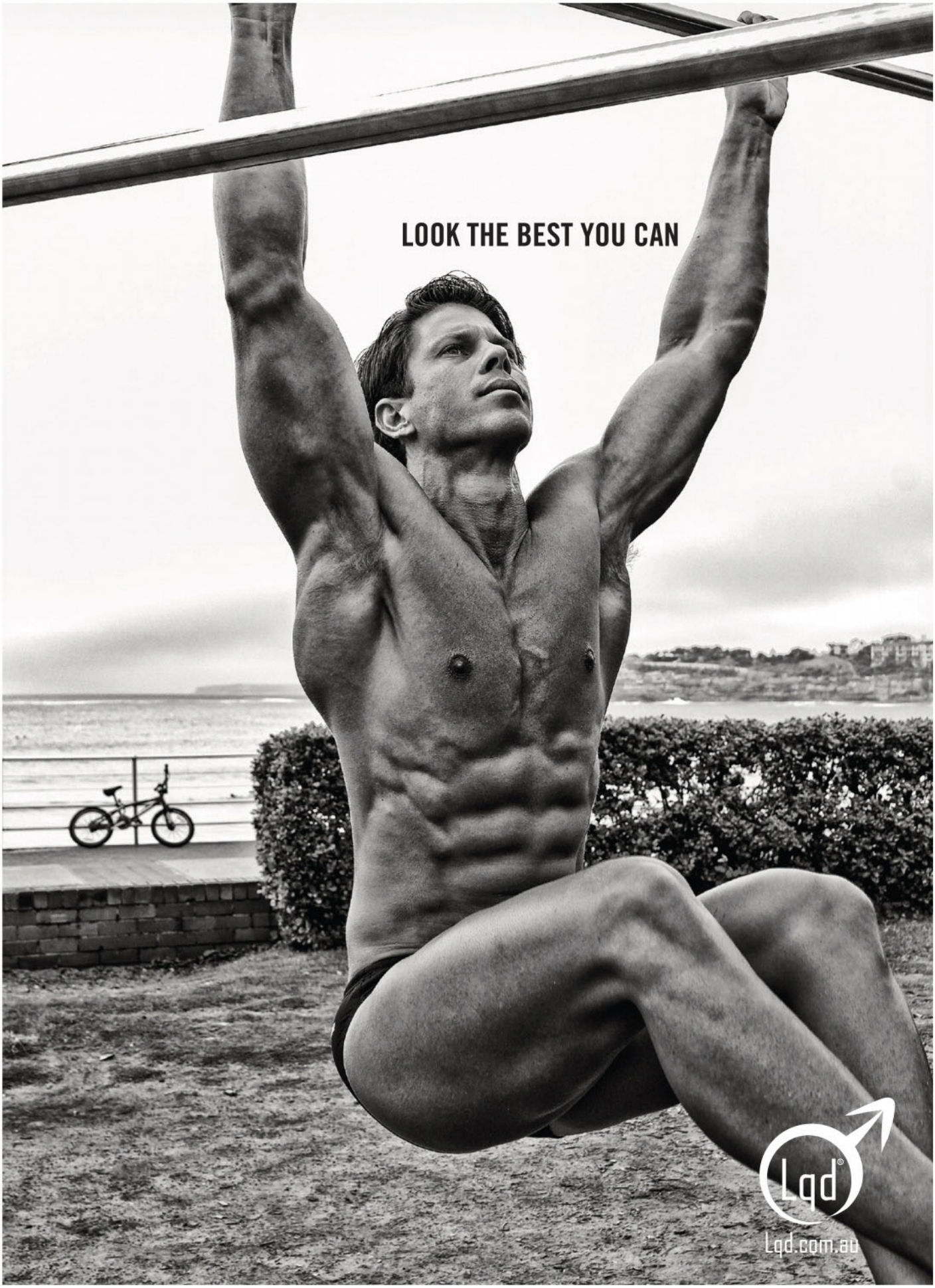
Turn to page 38 to find out all about this Australian BMX champion - one of our country's most successful athletes. ***carolinebuchanan.com***



EAT

SAFFRON

Adding the ancient spice to your food can pay big dividends. One study showed men who ate 300 milligrams of saffron before training produced 63 percent more isometric force and reported less DOMS than men who took a placebo.


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Shoulder the load

You love the look of a well-developed shoulder, but all that weight work may cause more harm than good. Here's how to make sure your body's most mobile joint stays strong and healthy.

BY SOMMER ROBERTSON-ABIAD

THE SHOULDER IS THE MOST flexible joint in the body, but it's also one of the most injured. Blame its hypermobility (no other joint can move 360 degrees) and underlying instability. But your workout routine may also be causing trouble. "Shoulder injuries are often the result of imbalances between the chest and back muscles, particularly the pectoralis major, the infraspinatus and deltoid muscles," says Alvin Brown, an osteopath and clinical director of the Centre for Healing and Personal Potential in Ontario, Canada. These imbalances are often linked with tightness and inflexibility. Poor lifting technique can also cause problems.

The most common shoulder injuries include tendinitis, bursitis and tears. If you have a loss of full range of motion above 90 degrees and pain when moving your arm around, you're most likely suffering from one of these injuries, Brown says. Here's how to ID the issue you're dealing with and what you can do to prevent it from happening in the first place.

HOW TO TREAT

STEP 1 | RICE. Rest, ice, compression and elevation work best in early stages. Cold therapy is especially helpful to reduce pain and inflammation.

STEP 2 | Alternate heat and ice. Contrast therapy may be more beneficial if the injury is more than a few days old, since it increases blood flow to the injured area.

STEP 3 | For chronic shoulder pain, avoid any overhead exercises that involve continuously moving the arm from below to above shoulder level.

START HERE

SHOULDER PAIN DIAGNOSIS

IF PAIN IS...
Coming in gradually over time but goes away with warm-up; felt on outside or front of shoulder, spreading down to elbow; felt at night, especially when lying on affected shoulder; getting worse when raising arms or lifting overhead; felt during heavy pushing or pulling movements.

YOU MAY HAVE:

ROTATOR CUFF AND BICEPS TENDINITIS OR SUBACROMIAL BURSITIS

Tendinitis is an inflammation of tendons, often due to repetitive movements. It can occur with bursitis, an inflammation of the bursa (a fluid-filled sac at top of shoulder).

IF PAIN IS...
Sharp or a dull ache deep in the shoulder; accompanied by weakness when lifting hand above shoulder height, when reaching behind back or rotating arm; felt at night, especially when lying on affected shoulder; felt at rest as condition progresses.

YOU MAY HAVE:

ROTATOR CUFF TEAR

A tear can occur under heavy loads (such as lifting too heavy of a weight overhead), but it's more commonly caused by repeated microtrauma that wears the rotator cuff tendons over time.

IF PAIN IS...
Tender to touch at front of shoulder or made worse with lifting, pulling or repetitive overhead reaching; accompanied by a "catching" or "clicking" in the shoulder with movement; causing difficulty reaching behind back and overhead.

YOU MAY HAVE:

BICEPS TENDINITIS

Although it's in the biceps muscle, continuous or repetitive overuse of the biceps tendon can be felt through overhead movements, rotator cuff tears and chronic shoulder instability due to weakness in the rotator cuff and upper-back muscles.



STAY HEALTHY

THE BEST WAY TO REDUCE your risk of injury is by improving flexibility in the rotator cuff and shoulder capsule, notes Whitney Wiser, a trainer and IFBB bikini pro. At right are three key stretches to improve your shoulder ROM, which can help both prevent injury and speed recovery. Follow these stretches with a light warm-up (maximum 2.5kg weights), doing one set of 15 reps of each of the following: front dumbbell raises, side lateral raises and dumbbell internal and external rotations.

ANATOMY OF THE SHOULDER

The shoulder joint is formed by the union of the humerus, the scapula (the shoulder blade) and the clavicle (collarbone). It's actually made up of two separate joints and one pseudo-joint – the glenohumeral, the acromioclavicular joint and the scapulothoracic joint. Together, these three joints facilitate movement and allow the arm to rotate around its axis at the shoulder, such as when you're doing movements like the front raise to overhead press. The supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor and subscapularis (or SITS muscles) are the small muscles, known as the rotator cuff, that help stabilise and control "free" movement of the shoulder around its axis.



OVERHEAD SHOULDER STRETCH

TARGETS: INFERIOR SHOULDER

Stand erect and extend your arm overhead with the elbow flexed, hand resting on the upper back. Grab your elbow with the opposite hand and gently pull your arm downwards. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 4 times per side.



CROSSOVER ARM STRETCH

TARGETS: POSTERIOR SHOULDER

Stand erect and extend your arm in front of you. Place the opposite hand on your elbow and gently pull your arm across your chest. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 4 times per side.

DOORWAY STRETCH

TARGETS: ANTERIOR SHOULDER

Stand in a doorway and hold on to both sides of the door jam with your hands slightly behind you. Extend your arms, allowing them to straighten as you lean forward. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 4 times.

SHUTTERSTOCK



Back yourself

From bullied school kid to champion bodybuilder, New Zealand-born **RIGO GASIO** has come a long way.

Name: Rigo Gasio
Date of birth: 09/05/1987
Birth place: Auckland, New Zealand
Lives: Melbourne, Australia
Height: 181.5cm
Contest weight: 87kg
Off-season weight: 92kg
Occupation: part-time employee at AAA Supplements and personal trainer
When did you start weight training? I started weight training when I was 15 at my local gym, "Le gym". Nothing serious, I just walked in and copied the biggest guys in the gym. I would copy everything my older brother did and that included reading all of his bodybuilding magazines.
Where do you train? I like to train at multiple gyms throughout the week. It's selfish, but I do this so I don't get too friendly and become a part of the social circle in one gym. Personally this affects my training in a negative way. In saying that, my home gym is Evolve247 in Moorabbin (Melbourne). Awesome staff, equipment and loud-ass music to fuel my session.
Do you have a training partner? I train alone with no set gym partner. I strongly believe you have to be able to motivate yourself during training and not cheat yourself or cut corners just because no one is there to say otherwise. But I do have a handful of people I like to train with for some friendly competition.
Favourite exercise? Dumbell side lateral raise.
Hate-to-do exercise? Abs
The one exercise everyone must do? Squat of any variation.
Best/biggest lift? Deadlift.
Your best body part? I'd say arms. Genetically it doesn't take much for my arms to grow, so I keep arm training to a minimum.
Anything you'd like to improve? Chest and hamstrings need work
Most memorable competition moment? Taking out my first win, with my family and friends in the crowd and having my fellow competitors congratulate me with sincerity on stage.
Competition diet? My diet is by my coaches Brent Tomlinson and Nathan Rocks. I'd love to say more but all I can say is it's very clean, nutritious and more than enough to keep me fuelled and efficient.
What supplements do you use? My staples are multivitamins (Animal Pak), whey protein isolate (Ronnie Cole WPI), aminos (Anabolic State) and CON-CRET creatine.
Sponsors? AAA Supplements and DoYouEven apparel.
Favourite diet food? Jasmin rice, pre- and post-workout
All-time favourite meal? Lamb chops cooked in oyster sauce with pumpkin and white rice.
Who do you admire most in your sport? I really admire Steve Cook in

PHOTO BY GARY PHILLIPS



STRONG ROOTS
As a child, Gasio gained self-confidence through learning Taekwondo.



my sport, mainly because he sends a positive message across the fitness industry as a whole. He teaches good values – being humble and staying positive. These are traits of a true champion, on and off the stage.

How has weight training affected your life and sport? Like I mentioned earlier, I used to sit reading my brother's bodybuilding magazines, and now I can't believe someone is going to be reading about me! I've learned that I can achieve by applying what I learn from experience, as well as discipline and goal-setting.

Goals and aspirations for your future? Becoming an IFBB men's physique pro is still my main goal. I aspire to be an international fitness model, which really goes hand in hand with the men's physique class. I want to inspire people through my actions, to lead by example.

The best tip you could pass on to someone starting off in your sport? Dont follow something blindly – do your research. We now live in a world where bad information is just as easy to find as good information. If you're trying a new exercise or routine give it time to see the difference it may or may not make. Learn from your failures; don't make the same mistake twice. And always back yourself 100 percent.

GASIO'S TRAINING SCHEDULE

A typical training week for Gasio would be a six-day split.

DAY 1
Quads & calves

DAY 2
Heavy chest

DAY 3
High volume back & biceps

DAY 4
Delts, hams & abs

DAY 5
High volume chest & triceps

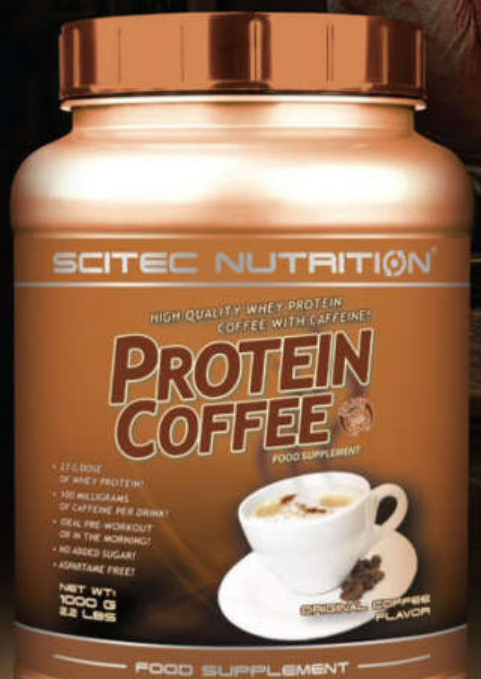
DAY 6
Heavy back

DAY 7
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10 min rotation - 1 hr +

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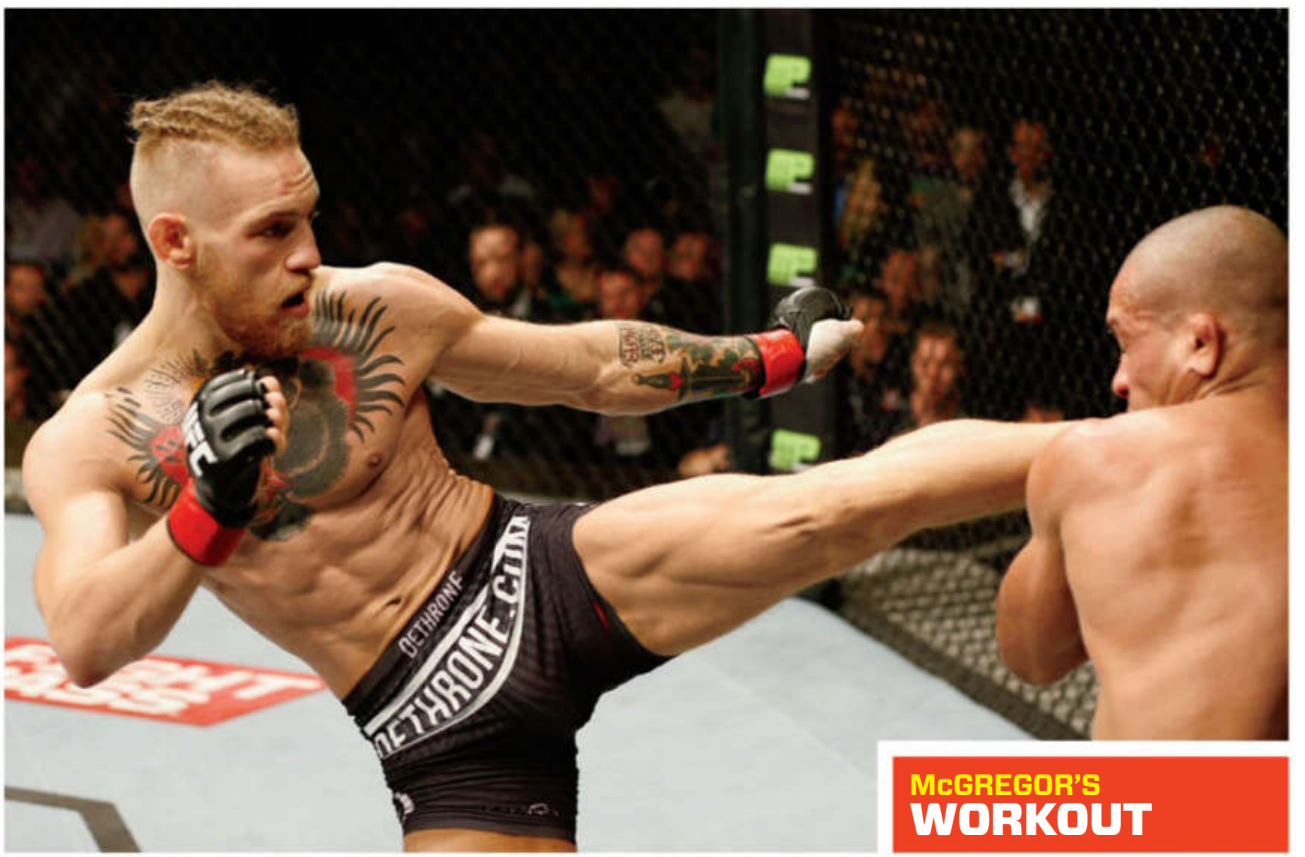
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Slugfest

UFC star **CONOR MCGREGOR** has become the first-ever Irish UFC champ.

BY MARK BARROSO

FOR CURRENT UFC INTERIM Featherweight Champion Conor McGregor, mixed martial arts training starts and ends with control. McGregor's movements revolve around control of body, mind and breath.

"If it doesn't involve balance I don't think it's beneficial," says McGregor. "I do yoga every day. I'm perfecting my handstand, I like the tree pose with a side leg extension and the plank/side plank."

Just don't expect McGregor to get to yoga class on time. The Irish-born featherweight doesn't keep a schedule in a traditional sense. He simply wakes up and starts moving.

"I'm self-taught, and nothing is set by a clock," says McGregor. "Yesterday, I did pool work, then went to the gym and did jiu-jitsu rounds, pad work, jump rope, core work and dead hanging from objects."

McGregor does free-weight exercises such as single-leg barbell deadlifts to build strength and balance simultaneously. His most valuable skill, though, is intangible.

"My belief is my best asset, and I have a stronger mindset than my opponent," he says.

McGregor approached (and won) his title fight against Chad Mendes on July 11, and he prepared as he has done for all previous bouts.

"I entered the contest formless and fearless," McGregor says. "He was just a blank face and a new body."

Moreover, McGregor views his history-making win as bigger than himself. He's in this game to make his Irish supporters proud.

"My coach and team have been with me since Day 1," he says, and it was them he proudly raised the gold for.

McGREGOR'S WORKOUT

EXERCISE	DURATION
Dynamic stretch	10–15 min
Muscle-up	10 reps
Handstand push-up	10 reps
Push press	10 reps
Boxing	20–30 min
Grappling	20–30 min

MCGREGOR'S STATS

AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
27	175cm	65.5kg

RESIDENCE
Dublin, Ireland

ZUFFA LLC/GETTY IMAGES/COURTESY OF UFC





4



1





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Bowling pins

Benson W sent us his forearm workout to review. Here's how we fixed it.

BY SEAN HYSON

THE FOREARMS consist of the wrist flexor, wrist extensor and brachioradialis muscles. They're smaller muscles and therefore are designed more for endurance and frequent bouts of work than explosive or heavy movements. They also get plenty of incidental work whenever you grab a bar or dumbbells for any other exercises, or carry shopping bags home from the supermarket. Here's how to set up a forearm training plan that challenges these muscles without overtraining them.

BENSON'S OLD WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Hammer curl	4	10
Reverse curl	4	10
Wrist curl	3	20
Reverse wrist curl	3	20

***M&F* RATING: C**

OUR ADVICE

Take advantage of all the ways the forearms already get worked. **SAVE THE CURL VARIATIONS FOR YOUR ARM DAY AND DEADLIFT ON EITHER A LOWER BODY OR BACK DAY.** You can do this routine at the end of either of those days – it includes a static hold, one major forearm builder you overlooked. Improving your grip will drive up your poundages, as well as add meat above your wrists.

BENSON'S NEW WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
▶ Suitcase deadlift hold	3	*30 SECS
Wrist curl	3	20
Reverse wrist curl	3	20

* Work up to 30 seconds.



QUICK TIP
If you have farmer's walk handles, you can use them for the suitcase deadlift hold.

ANDY McDERMOTT is a fitness coach in Hollywood. For free training advice, follow him on Facebook: ***AndyMcDermottFitness,*** Instagram: ***@andymcdermottfitness*** and Twitter: ***@andymcd23***



QUICK TIP
Swing your arms back, then powerfully swing them forward as you jump.

Broadly defined

Lack of time and equipment is no excuse for not training. With a little room to do a broad jump, you've got everything you need.

WHAT IT IS

A 15-minute total-body workout from celebrity trainer Andy McDermott. It combines broad jumps, push-ups, lunges and mountain climbers to work arms and legs as well as explosivity and endurance. Try it on a day when you don't have much time and you'll still feel like you got a full workout. Best of all, there's no equipment required.

WHY IT WORKS

A proper broad jump is a total-body move and recruits a significant amount of fast-twitch muscle fibre. Starting the circuit with broad jumps excites the central nervous system for the work ahead. McDermott says, "When you incorporate broad jumps, you're training like an athlete and burning fat while you develop power."

THE WORKOUT

DIRECTIONS: set a timer for 15 minutes and perform the following circuit continuously, resting as little as possible until the time is up.

EXERCISE	REPS
▲ Broad jump	5
Single-arm eccentric push-up*	10
Walking lunge	20
Mountain climber	30 sec.

*Use one arm to lower your body, two to explode back up. As a note on form, McDermott says, "Head to heel, straight as steel."

IAN SPANIER

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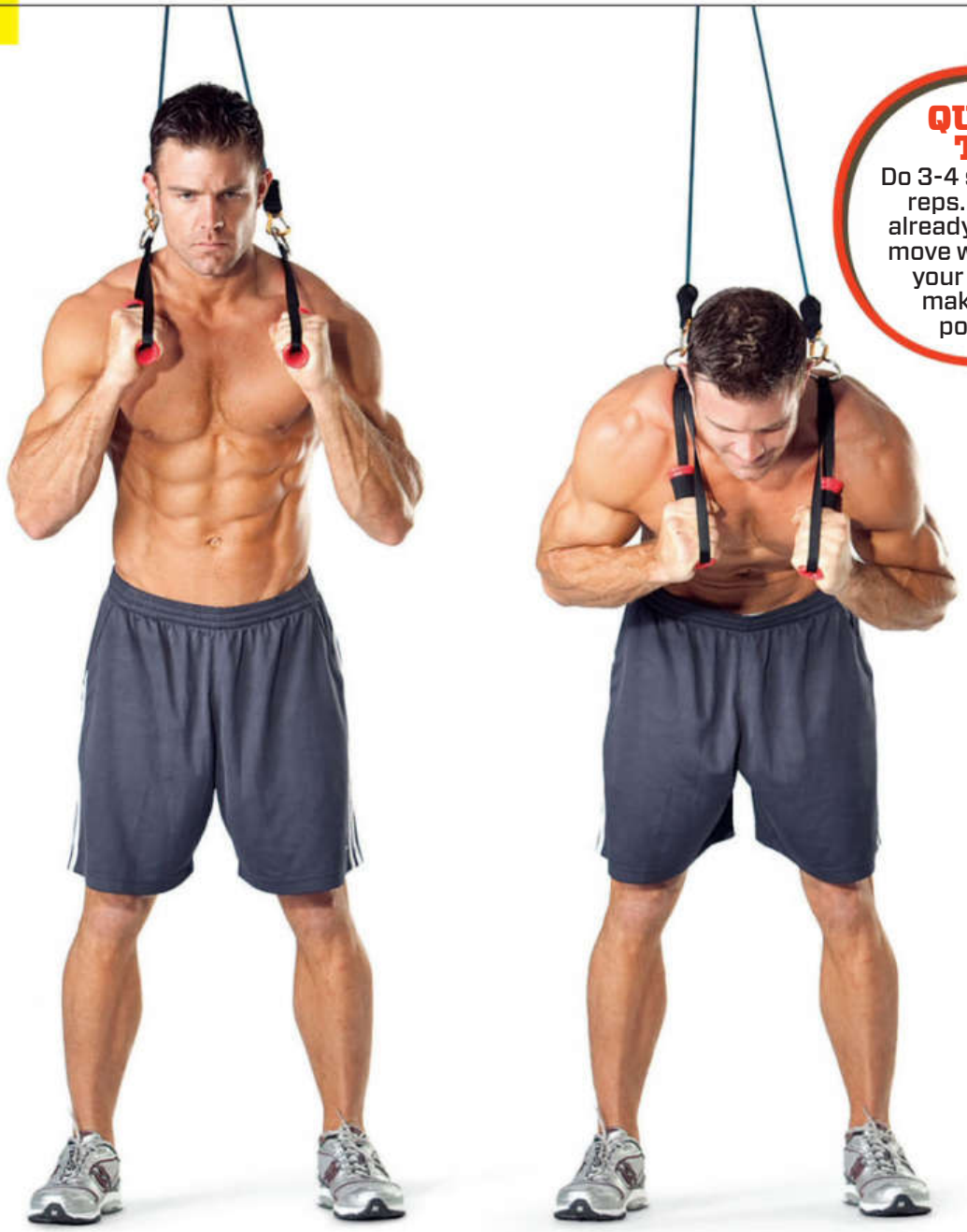
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QUICK TIP

Do 3-4 sets of 6-8 reps. If you're already lean, this move will thicken your abs and make them pop out.

Take a stand

Band crunches done standing work more core muscle and skyrocket your squat and deadlift numbers. BY SEAN HYSON

HOW TO DO IT STANDING CRUNCH

1 LOOP A BAND over a sturdy object and hold an end in each hand. (You can also use a rope handle on a cable machine.) Stand with feet shoulder width apart or a bit wider so you feel stable.

2 BRACE YOUR ABS and crunch your head towards your hips, pulling the band down. Breathe out on the way down and control as you slowly return to the start.

CORE CRUSHER

Standing crunches work your abs from a position that's very similar to how you set up for squats and deadlifts, so the core strength that carries over is immense.

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QUICK TIP
To get a taste for McCullough's style, turn regular push-ups into T-push-ups (shown) to engage your core.

Injury forced former US footballer **TODD McCULLOUGH** to rethink his training – and his results have never been better. AS TOLD TO MATT TUTHILL

I GREW UP A BIG Florida University fan and got to see that childhood dream of playing for them come true. I always lifted heavy. In high school I benched 335 (152kg), but injuries started to pile up in college. I've had three knee surgeries and two shoulder surgeries. I knew something had to change, but if I didn't sweat every day, I'd go insane. So I started playing around with yoga, and my body started to feel great.

At the same time, I started to lose muscle hardness and definition. I didn't look as ripped as I had been. Over the next few years, I merged yoga and resistance training. What I came up with was a series of 20-minute workouts you can do on a yoga mat.

Try the workouts and they'll really kick your ass and you'll feel better. You're going to take your whole body through full ranges of motion, and you'll be much better off for it.

Everyone should ask themselves, "Am I developing functional strength?" It's one thing to isolate a muscle, but we don't move like that. You need to use the whole body.

THE WORKOUT

DIRECTIONS: complete this circuit five times through, resting as little as possible.

EXERCISE	REPS
Downward dog push-up*	15
Squat jump	15
Plank to elbows-knees**	10***
Lunge to kick	10***

*From a push-up position, pike your hips in the air, then flatten out, do a push-up and repeat.
**From a plank position, alternate bringing your opposite elbow and knee together and squeezing your abs.
***Per side.

LUCAS ROSSI

What I've learned

Four tips to fast-tracking your gains, based on my 15 years in fitness. BY ADAM BORNSTEIN



MY EDITORS ASKED me to condense my entire training philosophy into what you see here, and while I couldn't really do that, I did arrive at four important take-homes that, if followed, will serve up consistent gains and fewer setbacks throughout your training life.

ADAM'S FOUR TIPS

1 THINK FIRST, LIFT SECOND Make sure your training is balanced and pays attention to your weaknesses. If you always do more pushing exercises than pulling ones, you know where to start.

2 APPRECIATE EVERY FIVE POUNDS All of strength training boils down to progressive overload. If you focus on adding five pounds (2.5kg) to a lift each time you train it, you'll see big gains.

3 FAILURE BRINGS FAILURE If you can't add five pounds, you're going too hard. Never train to the point where you can't perform a rep with good technique.

4 DON'T SKIP CARDIO The muscular system is fuelled by the aerobic system, so keeping up cardiovascular fitness allows you to stay fresh longer during weight workouts.

EDGAR ARTIGA



Get High

Lighter weights for more reps can boost size

BY BRYAN HAYCOCK, M.SC.

HYPOTHESIS
A review of more than 60 training studies indicates training with weight loads between 65–85% of your 1RM is the sweet spot for hypertrophy.

RESEARCH
Trained subjects were divided into high-resistance and low-resistance groups. The high group used 70–80% of its 1RM. The low group used 30–50% of its 1RM for three sets of seven exercises targeting all major muscles. Ninety seconds of rest was taken between sets. The groups trained three times per week for eight weeks, with all sets taken to failure.

FINDINGS
Both high and low groups produced increases in thickness of the biceps (5.3% vs. 8.6%, respectively), triceps (6% vs. 5.2%, respectively), and quadriceps (9.3% vs. 9.5%, respectively). Improvements in strength were different; however, with the high group showing better improvements in strength.

CONCLUSION
This study shows that lighter-weight, high-rep training taken to failure can produce equivalent gains in size as more traditional weight loads and rep ranges, even in trained subjects.

APPLICATION

Although this study was able to demonstrate equal gains in overall muscle size with 25- to 35-rep sets as well as with 8- to 12-rep sets, it did not identify which fibres contributed most to the growth. It is likely that the high-rep training resulted in more slow-twitch fibre growth, and the low-rep training produced fast-twitch fibre growth. Ideally, you would want to stimulate the growth of both types of fibre to maximize gains. So, incorporate both high- and low-rep training into your routine.

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By example

Trainer and bodybuilder **MAIK WIEDENBACH** stays true to his athletic roots. BY MARK BARROSO

AS AN OLYMPIC-LEVEL swimmer from Germany, Maik Wiedenbach lifted weights four to five times a week to improve performance. After moving to the US, he began bodybuilding.

"When I started training people, I wanted to lead by example so I started competing," Wiedenbach says. The former Musclemania champ adds sets and weight each session for four to five weeks, deloads for two weeks, and repeats that cycle. "I train heavy going into a show," Wiedenbach says. "That's the only way I keep muscle." To stay lean year-round, he eats zero carbs on non-training days, relying on almond butter to beat cravings.

His leg workout at right yields a mature, balanced physique.

MAIK DEBUNKS 3 FITNESS MYTHS

MYTH 1

DON'T EAT CARBS AT NIGHT

FACT: total calories matter more than timing. Too many carbs causes weight gain.

MYTH 2

HIGH REPS EQUAL MORE SIZE

FACT: the 6- to 12-rep range, combined with excess calories, is great for size.

MYTH 3

YOU MUST DO CARDIO TO LOSE FAT

FACT: cardio helps by burning extra calories, but you need to refine your diet for fat loss.

WIEDENBACH'S LEG WORKOUT

DIRECTIONS: do A1-A3 as a triset, resting 45 seconds between sets. Rest 3 minutes after A3.

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Barbell box squat	4	5
A1) Elevated barbell squat*	3	10
A2) Barbell squat	3	10
A3) Wide-stance** barbell squat	3	10
Sissy squat	3	12
Leg press Machine calf raise	8	15

*Elevate each heel on a one-kilo plate.
**Feet are outside shoulder width apart.

THE STATS

AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
39	188cm	104kg

RESIDENCE
New York City, US

WEBSITE
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GREGORY JAMES

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LEARN MORE from all-natural powerlifter Greg Nuckols at his site, *strengtheory.com*

Blow up your bench



All-natural powerlifter **GREG NUCKOLS** gives you the road map to bench-press more than ever.

TO TRULY UNLOCK your full potential, everyone needs a scientifically-backed program that ensures results. If you're a raw, drug-tested powerlifter, the efficacy of your programming becomes even more important. That's why we consulted Greg Nuckols for this month's strength program. In 2013, Nuckols set a raw, drug-tested powerlifting total of 1885 (855kg) at a body weight of 110kg. Suffice it to say that Nuckols' programming is airtight, just like the bench program he presents here. Best of all, it's so simple you could start doing it right now without changing everything else in your routine.

"UNLIKE TRAINING FOR SIZE, STRENGTH TRAINING IS LIKE SPRINTING," NUCKOLS SAYS. "WHEN QUALITY BREAKS DOWN, THAT PART OF THE WORKOUT IS OVER."

NUCKOLS' BENCH PROGRESSION

DIRECTIONS: other lifts in your program are unaffected. This includes working sets, not warm-up sets.

1 **HOW MUCH WEIGHT:** use a load between 80% and 85% of your one-rep max.

2 **HOW MUCH REST:** as needed between sets so you can put forth maximum effort in each set, Nuckols says.

WEEK	SETS	REPS
1	4	2
2	6	2
3	8	2

"I would max out no more than every three to four cycles [10–12 weeks]," Nuckols says. You can expect a 5 to 7 kilo PR when you do.

IAN SPANIER

ABOUT THE DOCTOR
Dr Victor Prisk is a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon, former gymnast and GNC medical advisory board member.



Carpal bummer

Carpal tunnel doesn't just affect those who type a lot but lifters, too. Here are the signs, and how to treat them. BY DR VICTOR PRISK

IF YOU REGULARLY WORK with your hands, especially performing repetitive work, it's highly likely that you've heard of carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). CTS results from compression of the median nerve as it crosses your wrist through a tunnel created by your wristbones and the ligaments that connect them together.

Gym rats may be at increased risk for CTS from overtraining with pulling and pushing movements. Excessive wrist flexion in pulling movements or pushing too much from the base of the palm (closer to the wrist) can lead to nerve irritation. Use of extra-tight wrist wraps or lifting straps can also lead to carpal tunnel compression and subsequent CTS. Forceful flexion of the wrists during lifting movements can cause shooting pains or "zings" from compression of the nerve, hinting towards improper form.

Once the condition is diagnosed, you must be vigilant to get the nerve damage under control. If not, CTS can require surgery. Focus on holding the wrist in a more neutral manner and avoid cheating with heavy weight. Laying off the weights when you feel that zing or using a night splint can help limit symptoms. Most people sleep with their wrists flexed, which causes more nerve compression.



PER BERNAL

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Always pushing

You called my physique the greatest of all time – and it makes me want to push harder than ever. BY FRANK ZANE



QUICK TIP
Keep rest short and train with a partner who'll help set a brisk workout pace.

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WHAT AN HONOUR TO BE AWARDED Best Physique Ever by the editors of *Muscle & Fitness!* This acknowledgment really makes me feel good about myself and adds fuel to my fire. It's almost like winning Mr Olympia again.

And it makes me want to train hard again. For me that means working out three times a week with a training partner in my gym, which contains my Mr Olympia equipment that I've used and maintained for the past 35 years. It's even better now than it was then because the weight stacks slide more smoothly on the guide rods through years of repetition. My equipment is a metaphor for how my body works.

It's been more than 30 years since I last competed and since then I've been teaching bodybuilding at Zane Experience in San Diego (US). After earning an master's in psychology I began publishing the *Building the Body* quarterly and currently have three books in print and many more e-books and Kindle publications.

Almost fully recovered from shoulder surgery, I'll be able to do light movements on just about everything again. I can even shoot archery, something I haven't been able to do in years. I'll do three sets of each exercise, going a little heavier each set, stretching 20 seconds between sets. This is what I was doing a year ago before my shoulder started flaring up.

IN MY NEW MONTHLY COLUMN FOR THIS MAGAZINE, I WANT TO SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE I'VE AMASSED OVER THE YEARS.

Over the years I've used different versions of the three-way split – workouts spaced according to my level of progression. The one I've done the most is Day 1 pull, Day 2 legs, Day 3 push. I train Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, working each body part once a week. I plan to stay on that training plan and take it to a peak by the end of the year. I'm excited to be able to share my experience and advice along the way in my new column.



Turbo row

For a total-body, fat-blasting workout, it's hard to beat the indoor rower

BY KRISTIN MAHONEY

THE MOST OVERLOOKED – and underrated – cardio machine in the gym just might be the indoor rower. Also known as an ergometer (or "erg" among enthusiasts), the rower offers a high-intensity, full-body burn: A 63kg person rowing at a good pace can blast 119 calories in only 15 minutes. "Rowing is multifaceted in its benefits – there is virtually no impact, it can be as intense as you want and it's versatile enough for any fitness level," says Arielle Childs, an instructor at Row House studio in New York City, US.

Many think of rowing as primarily an upper-body workout, but it actually works the entire body, including your upper back, shoulders, arms, core, glutes, hips and especially legs.

Before you hop on a machine and start pulling, keep in mind that form is the key to getting a good workout and preventing injury. New erg users "tend to pull with their back rather than pushing with their feet, which can lead to back injury," explains Childs. Newcomers often just go for speed or do the mechanics out of order, both of which compromise results.

To stroke, first push off with your legs, then pivot your back, then pull the handle towards your body, bringing it level with the bottom of your pecs. Follow that order (legs, back, arms) to aid your technique. Then to come back, aka the recovery, reverse that order: extend your arms, bring your core forward and then bend your knees into your catch position.

"The entire stroke, both the drive and recovery, should be completed in one fluid motion," Childs says.

COREY JENKINS/CORBIS

FUNCTION FOLLOWS FORM

Rather than going for speed, dial in your technique.

FAT-BLASTING ROWING ROUTINE

Once you've got your form set, try this total-body burner from Childs. There are no built-in breaks, so just rest as needed.

WARM-UP (8 TO 10 MIN.)
Get on the erg and focus on the parts of stroke and recovery to improve technique.

PYRAMID
Focus on increasing your stroke rate by taking about 10 to 15 strong strokes at the following pace (strokes per minute): 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 28, 26, 24, 22, 20.

STRENGTH MOVES
Hop off the rower and do the following exercises for 45 seconds each: push-ups, squats, crunches, planks.

POWER INTERVALS
Pick up the pace and row for 20 seconds (try to maintain a 24 to 26 stroke rate), then recover for 20 seconds; repeat. Then row hard for 40 seconds, with 20 seconds of recovery, two times. Finish with 60 seconds of hard rowing, with a 20-second recovery after each.

STRENGTH MOVES
Hop off the rower and do the following exercises for 45 seconds each: side plank left side, side plank right side, V-up, Russian twist.

DISTANCE
Go as far as you can in three minutes, aiming for at least 600 metres. (If you pass this number, keep going.) Recover for 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat, trying to add an additional 20 metres to your previous distance.

Finish with a few minutes of total-body stretching.

Ride on time

National and World BMX champion **CAROLINE BUCHANAN** is one of Australia's most successful athletes

Twenty-four-year-old Caroline is one of Australia's greatest BMX and mountain biking champions, representing her country at the Olympic and international level. Most recently Caroline took out the silver medal at the BMX World Championships in Belgium this July, won the Manchester BMX World Cup in April and won her 15th Australian championship in Brisbane this May. She has also taken out three Mountain Bike World Championships.

Although still young, Caroline has been BMX racing for almost 20 years, having followed her big brother into the sport when she was only five years of age.

The Olympic sport of BMX involves strength, power, speed and technical ability. Races involve speeds of up to 60kph on tracks that are around 350 metres. Races last for as little as 25 to 40 explosive seconds. As well as BMX and mountain biking, Caroline also competes in downhill racing and Four-Cross, which is similar to BMX but with fewer riders, more obstacles and a longer riding time.

"The World Championships at the end of July is the major BMX event each year," Caroline says, "but the Olympics every four years is the pinnacle. I was in London for the 2012 Olympics. I won the Time Trial (which wasn't a medal event) and I won most of the lead in races, but unfortunately I slightly mistimed the start and ended up coming fifth in the final.

"But for me, the 2009 Four-cross World Championship was by far my fairy-tale night. It was held at Stromlo Forest Park, which is my local spot in Canberra. You can't beat winning your first world title in your home town! There were 10,500 screaming supporters, including my hairdresser, primary-school teachers, the local butcher, friends and family. I've been competing at BMX World Championships since I was eight, and that was my first win in racing at a World Championship – it was so sweet!"

Of course, the higher up the ladder a rider goes and the higher the stakes, the more competitive it gets, which can take its toll physically. "I've had a few accidents over my 20 years of competition," Caroline admits. "I got eight stitches in my chin just before my first BMX World Championships in 1997 from a fall over a table top jump.

"The next lot of accidents happened when I was 18 and I tore a disc in my back and a year later there was a broken finger, a broken arm and a ruptured blood vessel in my leg at 20.

"It continues with an infected knee at 22 and a couple of concussions at 24. Hopefully that will be the total list!

Caroline is an ambassador for the Layne Beachley's Aim for the Stars Foundation, which helps young women realise their dreams. She has also been a face of Bullying – No Way and is currently a Rexona "I will do" ambassador.

"In 2014 I started the all-girl BMX team called Buchanan Next Gen to help mentor and provide financial support to young girls in the sport with potential, to get the necessary equipment and overseas race experience necessary for them to realise that potential," Caroline says. The team now comprises of Mikayla Rose, 15, Paige Harding, 12, and Tayla Robertson, 9, who all went to the World Championships in July.

Unfortunately, women in BMX – as in most sports – receive less financial support and publicity than men, something of which Caroline is keenly aware.

"I am a great supporter and advocate for women in sport as both of my passions are male-dominated sports where there has been very little done to equalise sponsorships and pay cheques for women," she says. "In Australia and the US women get one third of the prize money for most BMX events, and half in most elite events at world level. That's one reason I loved winning that World Cup in Manchester, as it is the only World Cup venue to pay equal prize money for men and women."

You can find out more about Caroline at carolinebuchanan.com

CAROLINE'S CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2015
UCI BMX World Championships Silver Medal
Australian National BMX Champion
BMX Supercross World Cup Winner Manchester

2014
BMX World Cup Series Champion
Silver Medal BMX World Championships (time trial)
BMX Rider Of The Year (Interbike Awards)

2012/2013
2 x BMX World Champion

PHOTO CREDIT: ADAM MCGRATH


START 'EM YOUNG
Caroline has been racing BMX since she was only five years of age.
BOX
BOX
BOX

EAT

WHAT'S IN THE FRIDGE THIS MONTH



Fueled by fat

Hitting a weight-loss plateau? A ketogenic diet could be the answer.

BY MARK BARROSO



DEEP-DISH KETO PIZZA

YIELDS 9 SERVINGS

CRUST:
6 eggs, separated
½ tsp cream of tartar
½ cup unflavoured whey/egg-white protein powder
85g cream cheese, softened (or reserved yolks if dairy-free)
Coconut oil spray

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS:
Low-sugar marinara sauce
Spices
Organic chicken sausage
Mushrooms
Capsicum
Mozzarella/feta/goat cheese
Olives

1. Preheat oven to 190°C. Separate eggs and whip the whites and cream of tartar until very stiff. Slowly sift in protein powder to the whites.
2. Using a spatula, gently fold the cream cheese into the whites.
3. Spray a lasagne pan or cast-iron frypan with coconut oil spray and spoon mixture into it. Bake for 18 minutes.
4. Remove from oven; top with your favourite pizza toppings and cheese.
5. Return to oven; bake until cheese melts.

NUTRITION PER SERVING

161	13g	2g	11g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

Q: I'm considering the ketogenic diet, but I'm worried I'll feel tired and have a ton of cravings. Is there a right way to do it?

– SCOTT, VIA FACEBOOK

A: TO START ANY KETOGENIC DIET, you need to cut carbohydrates. By how much? Recent research defines a ketogenic diet as one with less than 50 grams of carbs per day. This brings your body into nutritional ketosis, in which it primarily uses ketones, or fatty acids, for energy. According to dietitian Dr Jeff Volek, this occurs when you're producing 0.5 to 3.0 mmol/L of ketones. Urine strips and handheld breath analysers can be used to measure ketone levels, but if you're keto-adapted, you'll know.

"Keto-adapted means you oxidise dietary and stored fat for energy instead of glucose," says Maria Emmerich, nutritionist and author of *The Ketogenic Cookbook*. "If you can handle skipping a meal, intermittent fasting, and go hours without carb cravings, you're likely keto-adapted."

Emmerich's macronutrient guidelines for a ketogenic lifestyle are 0.5 to 1 gram of protein per pound of lean body mass, less than 10 grams of carbs and about 80 percent of calories from fat, which doesn't leave much room for grains or fruit. To quell performance concerns, a 2012 *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* study found that elite gymnasts who ate 22 grams of carbs for 30 days lost fat mass and built muscle without losing strength. Recent research in *Obesity Reviews* found that people feel fuller while on ketogenic diets compared with when they ate their normal calories.

Before ridding your kitchen of starch, take the following precautions to alleviate side effects such as headaches, cramps or fatigue. Drink at least half your body weight in ounces (30ml) of water daily, Emmerich suggests. Next, consume extra sodium and potassium.

"When your body reaches ketosis, the liver releases a lot of sodium and water, so you need more salt," Emmerich says. "Bone broth is my favourite way to add sodium; it's filled with minerals."

The ketogenic diet even has some delicious recipes, like Emmerich's deep-dish keto pizza, shown above.

PREVIOUS PAGE: DEVON JARVIS. THIS PAGE: SNOWFLAKE STUDIOS INC./STOCKFOOD

Nature's edge

Sprouting your grains unlocks their full potential.

BY MARK BARROS

WHEN IN DOUBT, start to sprout. Sprouted grains – or partially grown grains – are deemed superior to their standard counterparts for a variety of reasons, including improved bioavailability of nutrients and increased antioxidant capacity. Under the right temperature and moisture conditions, a grain grows thin sprouts and begins to germinate into a plant. Instead of letting the sprout grow into a plant, you can eat or process the grain in its early stages to reap the benefits.

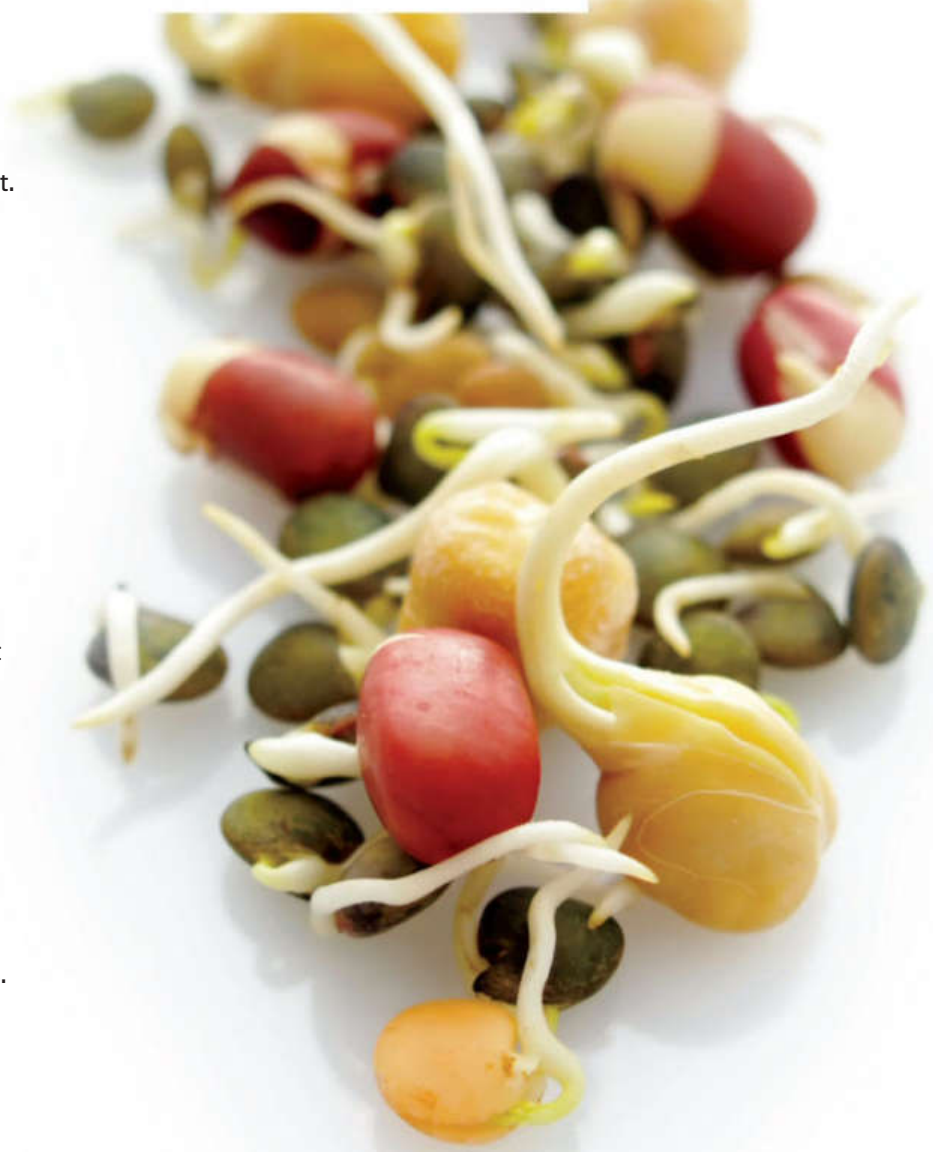
"The sprouting process makes the nutrients in the grains more highly absorbable, meaning the body doesn't have to work as hard to break them down," says dietitian Jessica Cording "This makes sprouted grain bread a great choice for promoting optimal digestion and muscle growth."

Further, a 2014 *International Journal of Food Science and Technology* study found that sprouted grains have more than double the vitamin E content, 19 percent more niacin and 50 percent more riboflavin than unsprouted grains.

So how do you sprout? Cording says to place the grains in a strainer or colander, then rinse and drain. Then place grains in a bowl, cover with water and soak overnight.

Next, drain and rinse the grains again, and finally soak in a covered jar for one to five days. Eat the grains raw, cook them or dry them in a dehydrator, low-temperature oven or in the sun before grinding into flour.

Wheat berries, quinoa, millet, barley and lentils are some options for at-home sprouting. If you're looking for sprouted grain products to buy, LifeStyle Bakery and Pure Life Bakery both offer sprouted grain bread, and you can buy sprouted grain flours and oatmeal at sproutedgrains.com.au.



FOODCOLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

SPROUTED GRAIN PANCAKES

MAKES 12 PANCAKES

- 2 cups sprouted grain flour
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- Salt
- Coconut oil

1. Mix flour, eggs, milk, baking powder and a pinch of salt until batter forms. Allow to sit for a few minutes.
2. Grease frypan with coconut oil.
3. Spoon batter onto frypan. Cook until browned on each side, flipping partway through.
4. Serve with desired toppings, such as fruit, chopped nuts or nut butter.

NUTRITION PER SERVING

85 CALORIES	4g PROTEIN	11g CARBS	3g FAT

ABOUT THE COOK Christian Coates is the creator of Soulmatefood and author of ***Fitness Gourmet.***



REFUEL
A 2012 study found that coconut water contains 1500mg/litre of potassium compared with 300mg/litre in sports drinks.

Coconut

Enjoy healthy, satisfying fat with these five easy-to-make dishes.

BY CHRISTIAN COATES

1 MAKE BEEF CURRY

Add 1 tsp coconut oil to a pan over medium heat. Add 285g beef chuck and cook until browned. Add ⅓ onion, 15g red chilli, and ½ tsp each cumin and garlic. Cook 10 minutes on low. Add 1 tsp honey, 90ml water and ⅔ cup chopped tomatoes. Simmer until beef is tender, stir in 100ml coconut milk and cook 3 minutes.

2 USE IT AS BATTER

Coat 200g chicken breast in 1 tbsp coconut milk. Mix 2 tsp breadcrumbs with 2 tsp dehydrated coconut and roll chicken in mix. Place chicken on a baking tray and bake 12–15 minutes at 175°C. Blend ½ tsp coriander, 1 tsp each cashews and mango chutney and 4 tsp coconut yoghurt until smooth. Use mixture as a dip.

3 ADD IT TO QUINOA

Rinse ½ cup tri-coloured quinoa under cold water in a colander, then add it to a pan or pot of boiling water. Cook for 15 minutes, drain and allow to cool. In a bowl, combine quinoa with 1 tbsp chopped stem ginger, ⅓ cup quartered lychee and 130ml coconut milk. Serve.

4 BLEND A PROTEIN PIÑA COLADA

Blend 150ml coconut milk, 120ml coconut water, 100ml pineapple juice, a small banana and 4 tbsp unflavoured whey protein powder. Blend until very smooth. The shake keeps for 24 hours in the refrigerator.

5 BAKE A COCONUT MUFFIN

Oil a 12-count muffin tin with coconut oil. In a bowl, combine 2½ cups almond flour, 1 tbsp coconut flour, ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp baking soda and stir. Pour in ¼ cup coconut oil, 2 eggs, ¼ cup maple syrup and ¼ cup coconut milk and mix well. Add 1 cup blueberries and 2 tbsp cinnamon. Pour batter into tin and bake for 25 minutes at 175°C. Cool and enjoy!

BRIAN KLUTCH

GET MORE RECIPES
Chef Robert Irvine's new book, *Fit Fuel,* is available now at *amazon* and *fitfuelbook.com*



BALANCE IT OUT
Always pair meat with vegies to add nutrients and fibre. Rocket goes well with skirt steak.

A cut above

This churrasco grilled skirt steak is tender, bursting with flavour and loaded with protein.

CHURRASCO STEAK

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

500g skirt steak, cleaned by butcher
1 tbsp unsalted butter
1 tbsp lime juice
1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground black pepper

1. Preheat grill to high heat.
2. Cut steak into 2 portions (250g each).
3. Melt butter about halfway in microwave or over the heat of the grill.
4. Add lime juice, rosemary and salt to the half-melted butter. Brush steaks with butter mixture and allow to sit for 15 minutes.
5. Season steaks with salt and pepper, then grill to desired doneness. Serve immediately.

NUTRITION PER SERVING

526 CALORIES	61g PROTEIN	3g CARBS	29g FAT

FOOD STYLING BY EUGENE JHO

SAM KAPLAN





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Melrose Organic Unrefined Coconut Oil is processed using the highest quality fresh, raw coconuts, retaining the beautiful aroma and flavour of coconuts. It is 100% Virgin cold pressed and unrefined. Coconut Oil isn't altered by heat making it an excellent versatile cooking oil for numerous cooking applications in frying, baking, added to smoothies or used as a substitute for butter or margarine.

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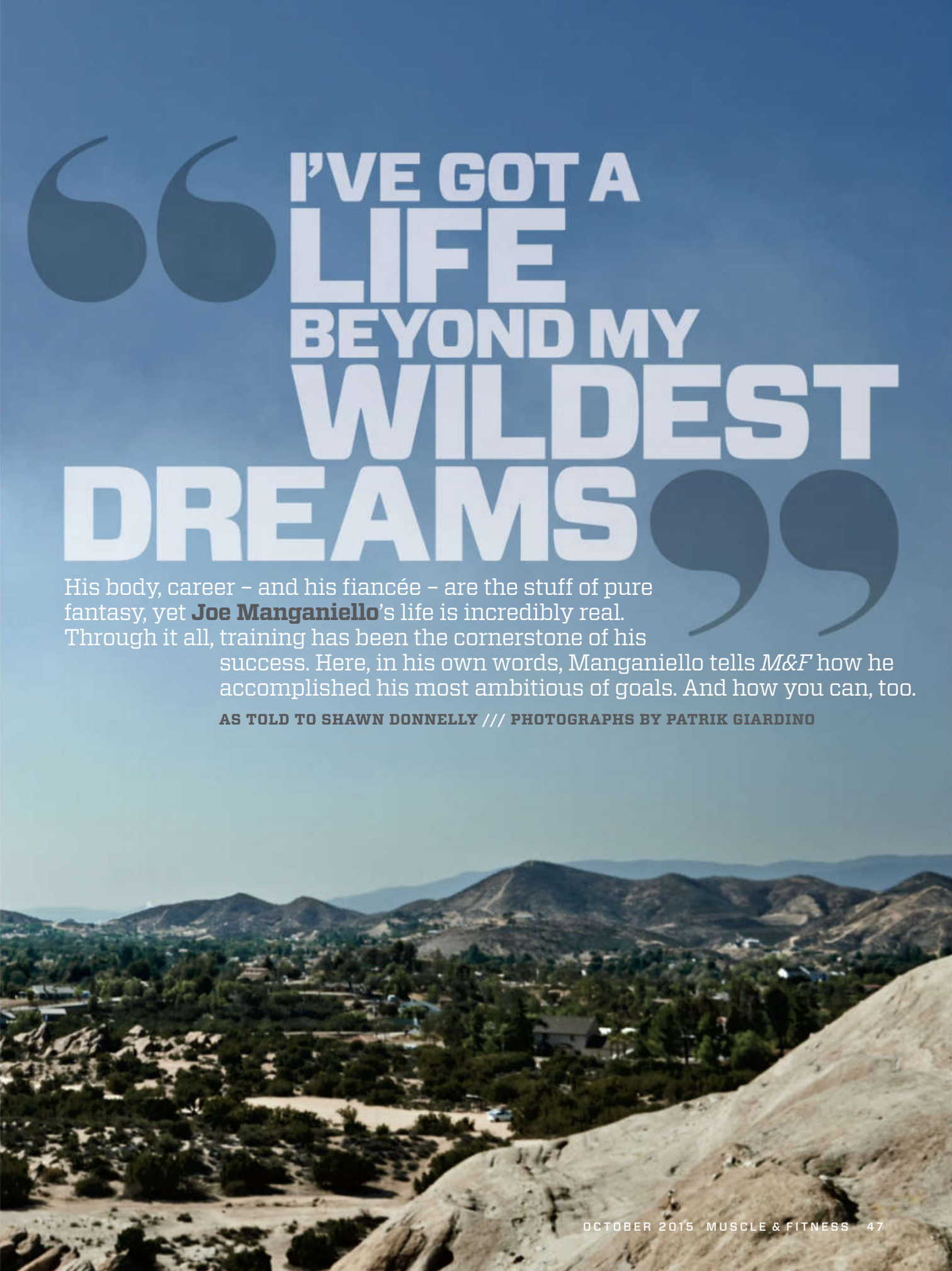
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“I’VE GOT A LIFE BEYOND MY WILDEST DREAMS”

His body, career – and his fiancée – are the stuff of pure fantasy, yet **Joe Manganiello**’s life is incredibly real. Through it all, training has been the cornerstone of his success. Here, in his own words, Manganiello tells *M&F* how he accomplished his most ambitious of goals. And how you can, too.

AS TOLD TO SHAWN DONNELLY /// PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRIK GIARDINO



I WAS VERY artistic as a kid. When I was, like, 5 years old, my mother used to walk me up to an old man's house where he taught chess, and he would give me chess lessons. I was always drawing, painting and writing, and I was really into weird things. At a surprisingly young age I was reading a lot of J.R.R. Tolkien and Stephen King. I was really into comic books. I was so into comic books that I was shoplifting them because I would read them so fast that paying for them started to not make sense.

So that was one train that was running. The other train was that I was head and shoulders taller than all the other kids and coordinated. I was good at sports. The first year I played football, I was the captain of the team. Then you get into high school. Just like *The Breakfast Club,* high school tries to put people into a category. You're supposed to fit into this certain niche, and that's never the case. You're always shades of different things. I was so diametrically opposite in these major, major ways. I got along with a group – the weirdo intellectuals – who generally hate jocks. And I also was the captain of a sports team. So I got along with the jocks.

I kind of had a foot in both of those worlds, and I think it gave me perspective on things. But I think that weirdness or those split-personality traits were what made Arnold Schwarzenegger so interesting to me. Because you had this guy who was built the way that heroes are supposed to be built. He came straight out of one of those comic books that I read. But when I read things about his life or saw him interviewed, as funny as he was being, as tongue-in-cheek as he was, you could tell that he was a very intelligent, book-smart person. And I came to find out that he's a big chess player as well. So I think that those odd characteristics or the lack of wanting to be restricted into one group or another – just being yourself, being an individual – is what formed the basis of my friendship with him when we met on the set of *Sabotage* [the 2014 movie].

A LOT OF RESULTS IN MY CAREER HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY PROPORTIONATE TO THE TYPE OF HEALTH, BOTH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL, THAT I KEPT MYSELF IN.

If you've seen my book, *Evolution* [Manganiello released the fitness book in 2013], you can see how skinny I was as a kid. I couldn't do one pull-up or one dip into high school, which has nothing to do with my athletic ability. It just had to do with my lack of any form of upper-body strength.

I played football, basketball and volleyball in high school. I had an MCL tear playing varsity football, returning a kickoff in a game. I tore it, and it gave me enough pause that I started thinking about what I wanted to do with my life.

I was going to go play basketball in college. I was set to do that, and I was going to study criminal justice. But at the last minute in high school... we had a TV studio and you could take TV classes. And I started writing and directing and producing films and TV shows. And then starring in them.

I wound up trying out for the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama. I think they took 17 actors out of 800 who auditioned from around the world, and I was one of them. And they gave me a scholarship to go to the school; I really got in at the last minute. But I think it set the table for the kind of career that I have now. The past few years have been kind of a reward for all of that weirdness or awkwardness. Because I get to be an artist and I get to be an athlete rolled into the same job.

The link between my acting and my fitness is an interesting thing. I think that I was doing great work for years. I've been acting for 22 years. I started in classical theatre. I started doing Chekhov and Ibsen and Shakespeare. And I was in sitcom after sitcom after sitcom. I did some plays that were nominated for awards. But none of those were a break until the physicality melded with the acting in *True Blood*. People really took notice.

I think I tried to get away with being the smoking, drinking artiste – you know, that romantic idea of the artiste – it just wasn't me. I'm at my best when I can find a role that offers that type of physicality.



JOE COOL Manganiello and co-star Channing Tatum grab a drink in *Magic Mike XXL.*

CLAUDETTE BARIUS/WARNER BROS



After *Spider-Man* in 2002, I didn't have an acting role for four years. I was a drunk who needed to quit drinking. It wasn't some form of "I don't want to act" or "I can't get cast". I had a serious issue with drinking that needed to be handled.

By the time this article comes out, I'll be 13 years sober, knock on wood. Did I get help? Yeah. No addict or alcoholic pulls that off without help, I'll say that – without somebody further down the path who can show them how to do it.

I started working with my trainer, Ron Mathews, right after I booked *True Blood*. My workouts with him are long and tough. It's called being in the pain cave. The workout has even evolved from what was in my book. We have these massive sets or we're doing something on a timer or we get into WODs [Workouts Of the Day], things like that.

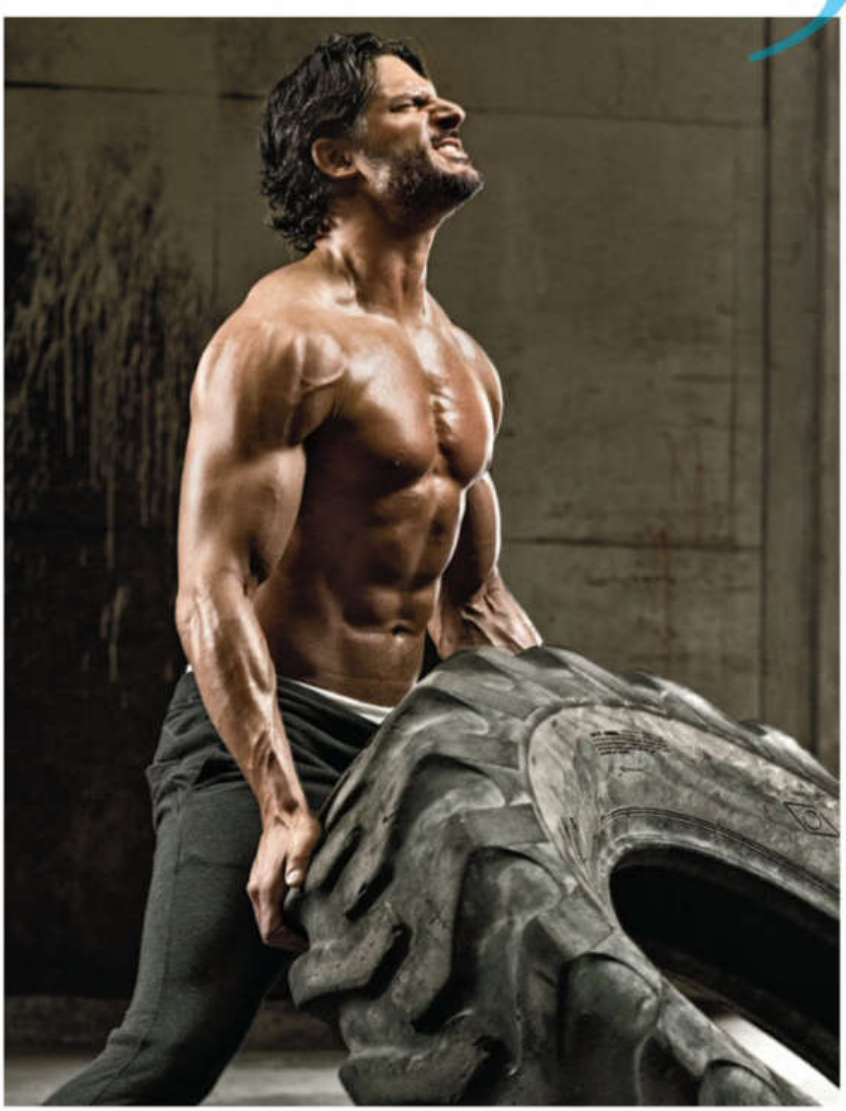
There's a moment when there's going to be 10 sets. And I'm on Set 5 or even Set 4, and I'm done. My body is starting to quit, I'm having a minor league panic attack in my brain because I can't visualise doing the next rep, let alone the next set, and I want to quit. And I think, "What am I doing this for? I don't have a movie coming up that I'm training for specifically. If I walked away or I quit, nobody would know. Who cares?"

And that's where you're going to grow. That's the spot. That's when you crack the pit, if you will. And that seed is inside. That's the good stuff. And you just put your head down, and you focus on the next rep. And then the next rep. And then the next rep. And then the next rep. And you keep moving. And you think you're going to have a heart attack and that you're going to drop dead. And you just push through and realise you're OK. And you realise you could complete the workout. And you realise it was the mind trying to stop you from achieving.

And that's really what my book *Evolution* was about. It was about putting yourself into a position where training becomes mental, not just physical. It's about pushing the mind past those perceived limitations. And the only thing I could say to people is you just have to back yourself into that corner and see what you're made of.

As far as my diet, I actually had my blood tested recently by this guy named Chris Talley. He started a company called Precision Food Works. He took 10 vials of my blood and did more than 200 tests on them for food allergies, blood enzymes, etc. And what I found from it was that my whole life I've been allergic

THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN KIND OF A REWARD FOR ALL OF THAT WEIRDNESS OR AWKWARDNESS [AS A KID]. BECAUSE I GET TO BE AN ARTIST AND I GET TO BE AN ATHLETE ROLLED INTO THE SAME JOB.



to eggs and milk and had no idea. So that's been a huge shift for me lately. Especially approaching age 40 the way that I am, I want to get any advantage I possibly can.

I don't think life is about having this sort of monklike existence where you don't get to enjoy life. I mean, it's about enjoying life. But I will say that I can't tell you how many people come up to me as if I'm their priest or something and start confessing all of their dietary sins to me and then grab their midsections in a public place and say, "I just can't get rid of this!" And I say, "You've got a tall glass of vodka sitting in your hand. There's your answer right there. Do you need me to point that out?"

At this point, I think I've got a life beyond my wildest dreams. I don't know that I could have allowed myself to feasibly imagine or wish for some of the things I've received. There is no bucket list for most of the things going on in my life.

Do I have the woman of my dreams? [*Editor's note:* if you've been living under a rock, Manganiello is engaged to Colombian-American actress Sofia Vergara.] Well of course. Absolutely. She was it for me, still is. Always will be.

Am I worried that paparazzi will crash the wedding? It's just part of my life now. You have to take these things into consideration. There was a helicopter that was hovering over my backyard in Beverly Hills the other day, which is a no-fly zone. What do you do about that? Try to shoot a shotgun at the helicopter? I don't know.

Every day seems like some new challenge with those people. And at some point they're going to realise that I'm just a normal boring guy in my personal life, and they're going to leave me alone. I just want to do good work, and I want to entertain people. At some point, hopefully, that will prove to be uninteresting to them and they'll leave me to do my work. That's all I want.

My fitness advice for others? There's always going to be somebody bigger than you in the gym – and somebody else skinnier than you. You're always going to be right in the middle – unless you're me. I was the absolute skinniest. I was the one who couldn't do one dip or one pull-up. And even if you're that person, there's still hope for you. So just get in there and get to work. M&F



JOE MANGANIELLO'S ASS-KICKING CONDITIONING WORKOUT

Manganiello trains three to four times per week. Here's his conditioning circuit via Ron Mathews, co-owner of Reebok CrossFit Lab.

EXERCISES	REPS
Deadlifts*	10-8-6-4-4-2
Toes to bar	8 after every deadlift set without rest
Sled drags or tyre flips right into plyo squat jumps**	5 times through
ON-THE-MINUTE DRILL	
Five times through for 10 minutes total. You have a minute to complete the work in each set. The remaining time is rest.	
Burpee box jump overs, 75–80cm box	8 reps (odd minutes)
Front squats	8 reps (even minutes)

*Joe does 100kg deadlifts for sets up to 10, 135kg deadlifts for sets of four. ("I don't have him max out on the deadlift since pure strength is not one of our goals," says Mathews. "He uses weights that are heavy, but he can comfortably move and get right into something else.")

**Drag the sled 35 metres; flip the tyre 10 times; do 10 squat jumps.



THE ONLINE REVOLUTION: get the full training, nutrition, and motivational plan – complete with video demonstrations of the exercises – at: ***muscle-fitness.com.au***

60 DAY REVOLUTION

TAKE A GOOD LOOK IN THE MIRROR RIGHT NOW AND SAY GOODBYE TO WHAT YOU SEE. SIXTY DAYS FROM TODAY, YOU'LL BE STRONGER, LEANER AND SMARTER ABOUT HOW TO PROGRAM FOR YOURSELF – AND YOU WON'T RECOGNISE THE PERSON LOOKING BACK AT YOU.

PRESENTED BY JAMES GRAGE AND THE EDITORS OF *M&F*

IT'S ALL IN THE NAME.

Because a revolution changes everything, suffice it to say ambition wasn't in short supply when we designed the 60 Day Revolution.

Spearheaded by James Grage, co-founder of BPI Sports and the model you'll see on these pages, the 60 Day Revolution is the result of a collaboration between Grage, *M&F*'s editors and advisers Nerijus Bagdonas, Kyle Hunt and Jim Sayih.

The program is aimed at building muscle and strength while slashing fat in short order, but that's only the beginning. The 60 Day Revolution was built around the idea that a truly great training program needs to be more than the end result it produces. Because plateauing with any given program is unavoidable if you don't change things up or move on to another plan entirely, you'll always be at the mercy of finding a new program – unless, of course, you learned to program for yourself, which is exactly what you'll learn to do here.

This program doesn't lock you into specific exercises. Rather, we show you which movement patterns must be trained in each session and provide exercises to choose from. For example, it's not necessary for everyone to barbell bench-press, but for overall development, it is necessary to do a horizontal press of some kind. Once you see the categories that need to be filled in and how to undulate intensity, you'll learn to program for the long-term. As the old saying goes, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life." We aimed to set you on your own self-sustaining path with an effective training and nutrition program – including motivation from top experts to keep you pushing. And yes, you'll get positively jacked in just 60 days.

THE WORKOUT WARM-UP

DIRECTIONS: perform the following warm-up as a circuit before all workouts.

EXERCISES	REPS
Shoulder mobility*	10
Side bend	10 each side
Trunk rotation	10 each side
Yoga push-up**	10
Band pull-apart	10

*You can use arm circles, face-pulls or the shoulder mobility exercise of your choice.

**Perform a normal push-up, then in the top position form a pike upwards with your hips; your body will form a triangle with the ground. Keep your back flat and legs straight.

DAY I: UPPER BODY

REP GUIDELINES FOR UPPER-BODY DAY

There are a wide variety of sets and reps used for each phase of the 60 Day Revolution. Refer to the chart below on Day I during each week of the program. All sets and reps are expressed as sets x reps. For instance, on Week 1 (Intro) on Triset No. 1, you'll do 3 x 10, or 3 sets of 10. Use the heaviest weights you can manage with good form, except in Week 7; this is a deload and meant as a break before Week 8, the Shock phase.

WEEK	TRISET NO. 1	TRISET NO. 2	TRISET NO. 3
1: INTRO	3 x 10	3 x 10	4 x 8–12
2: BASE	4 x 8	4 x 10, 8, 6, 4	4 x 8–12
3: OVERLOAD	4 x 10, 8, 6, 4	4 x 8	4 x 8–12
4: OVERLOAD	5 x 5	4 x 10, 8, 6, 4	4 x 8–12
5: OVERLOAD	6 x 3	5 x 5	4 x 8–12
6: OVERLOAD	6 x 10, 8, 6, 4, 4, 3	6 x 3	4 x 8–12
7: DELOAD	4 x 6–10	4 x 6–10	4 x 8–12
8: SHOCK	7–10 x 1	7–10 x 1	4 x 8–12



LOVE DISCOMFORT
"We're conditioned that if we're uncomfortable something is wrong," says sports psychologist Dr Jim Afremow. "Breathe into the discomfort and realise pleasure and pride are on the other end."



TATE PRESS
Lie on a bench with a pair of dumbbells pressed up. Bend your elbows so the weights come down to your chest. Extend your arms back to the top.



IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD
"The only limitations you really have are your imagination and determination," says former SEAL commander Alden Mills.

PREVIOUS SPREAD AND THIS SPREAD: JONATHAN DELGADO

DIRECTIONS: each workout consists of three trisets. Don't rest between exercises in a triset, and rest only 90 to 120 seconds at the end of each triset. In each category, choose one exercise and stick with it for that day; you can change it in subsequent workouts.

TRISET NO. 1

CATEGORY	EXERCISES
Heavy vertical pull (choose one)	Pull-up Chin-up Lat pulldown
TRISET WITH	
Horizontal push (choose one)	Barbell bench DB bench Alternating DB bench
TRISET WITH	
Frontal core (choose one)	Hanging leg raise V-up Cable crunch

TRISET NO. 2

CATEGORY	EXERCISES
Horizontal pull (choose one)	Barbell bentover row DB row Seated row T-bar row
TRISET WITH	
Heavy vertical push (choose one)	Barbell or DB push press Barbell or DB military press Landmine press
TRISET WITH	
Lateral or posterior core (choose one)	Pallof press Cable woodchop -Single-leg hyperextension Superman

TRISET NO. 3

CATEGORY	EXERCISES
Biceps (choose one)	Hammer curl Barbell curl Supinating DB curl Rope cable curl
TRISET WITH	
Triceps (choose one)	Close-grip Bench press Triceps dip Diamond push-up Tate press
TRISET WITH	
Rotator cuff (choose one)	Face-pull Band pull-apart Cuban press

DAY II: LOWER BODY

REP GUIDELINES FOR LOWER-BODY DAY

Refer to the chart below during each week of the program. All sets and reps are expressed as sets x reps. Use the heaviest weights you can manage with good form during all weeks, except for Week 7; this is a deload and meant as a break before you hit Week 8, the Shock phase, in which you'll use the heaviest possible weights that you can lift.

WEEK	SUPERSET NO. 1	SUPERSET NO. 2	HIP HINGE
1: INTRO	3 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 10
2: BASE	4 x 8	4 x 6	3 x 10, 8, 6
3: OVERLOAD	4 x 5	4 x 8	3 x 10
4: OVERLOAD	5 x 5	4 x 10, 8, 6, 4	3 x 10, 8, 6
5: OVERLOAD	4 x 3	4 x 5	3 x 8
6: OVERLOAD	5 x 8, 6, 4, 4, 3	4 x 6	3 x 10
7: DELOAD	3 x 6	3 x 6	3 x 6
8: SHOCK	5 x 2	5 x 3	4 x 3



DIRECTIONS: each workout consists of two supersets and a single lift (a hip hinge) performed in straight sets. Where you have exercises to choose from, pick one exercise for that particular day and stick with it; choose a different exercise the following week.

SUPERSET NO. 1

CATEGORY	EXERCISES
Double-leg push (choose one)	Back squat Front squat Goblet squat
SUPERSET WITH	
Active recovery	Passive hang (30–60 seconds)

SUPERSET NO. 2

CATEGORY	EXERCISES
Heavy single-leg push (choose one)	Barbell back lunge Barbell front lunge Step-up
SUPERSET WITH	
Active recovery	Primal squat

HIP HINGE

	EXERCISES
(choose one)	- Romanian Deadlift - Single-leg Deadlift

OPTIONAL SUPERSET

EXERCISES	SETS
Sled drag (30 yards)	3
SUPERSET WITH	
Sled push (30 yards)	3

BREAK IT DOWN

"Most people throw a goal into one big heaping dose, and then they get frustrated and give up because it's too overwhelming," Mills says. "When you start defining the elements of the goal and breaking it down into bite-size pieces that you can complete each day, the goal becomes manageable."

JONATHAN DELGADO



ALTERNATING DB BENCH
Lie down on a bench with a pair of dumbbells at your shoulders. Press the dumbbells up, one arm at a time, alternating for equal reps on each side.



JONATHAN DELGADO

DAY III: FULL BODY

FULL-BODY DAY REP GUIDELINES

DIRECTIONS: refer to the chart below during each week of the program. All sets and reps are expressed as sets x reps. Use the heaviest weights you can manage with good form during all weeks, except for Week 7; this is a deload. In Week 8, you'll use the heaviest possible weights that you can lift.

WEEK	SUPERSET NO. 1	SUPERSET NO. 2	FINISHER
1: INTRO	3 x 10	3 x 10	*
2: BASE	4 x 8	4 x 6	*
3: OVERLOAD	4 x 5	4 x 8	*
4: OVERLOAD	5 x 5	4 x 10, 8, 6, 4	*
5: OVERLOAD	4 x 3	4 x 5	*
6: OVERLOAD	5 x 8, 6, 4, 4, 3	4 x 6	*
7: DELOAD	3 x 6	3 x 6	*
8: SHOCK	5 x 2	5 x 3	*

*Finisher instructions provided at right.

DIRECTIONS: perform all supersets according to rep guidelines. When the supersets are complete, choose one finisher. Time your finishers from week to week to measure improvement.

SUPERSET NO. 1

CATEGORY
Deadlift
SUPERSET WITH
Push press

SUPERSET NO. 2

CATEGORY
Barbell lunge
SUPERSET WITH
Pull-up or lat pulldown

FINISHER

Directions: pick A, B, or C and do it AFAP (as fast as possible).

CATEGORY

A: Full-body circuit: perform three times through.

1) Alternating DB bench x 10
2) Inverted row x 12
3) Squat jump x 20

B: Squat Matrix: perform one time through. Perform 24 reps for each exercise. Finish all reps for each exercise before moving on.

1) Body-weight squat
2) Walking lunge
3) Split Squat jump
4) Squat jump

C: Row 500 Metres: set a pace that will allow you to finish in under two minutes.

DAY IV: CONDITIONING

DIRECTIONS: on each conditioning day, pick one session: Outdoor Sprint, Indoor Sprint or Rowing Machine, and use the rep guidelines provided for that week. Perform one conditioning day per week. If you have a lot of fat to lose, bump it up to two conditioning days per week. Note that Week 7 conditioning is 30 minutes of steady-state cardio at moderate intensity. There is no conditioning workout in Week 8, though you can perform Week 7's steady-state cardio session if desired.

OUTDOOR SPRINT

DIRECTIONS: perform each sprint workout as a circuit. Sprint, immediately follow it with an active recovery walk, then when the time is up, sprint again until all rounds are complete.

WEEK	ROUNDS	INTENSITY	ACTIVE RECOVERY
1: INTRO	6	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk
2: BASE	7	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk
3: OVERLOAD	8	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk
4: OVERLOAD	9	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk
5: OVERLOAD	10	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk
6: OVERLOAD	10	15- to 30-second sprint	1- to 2-minute walk

INDOOR SPRINT

DIRECTIONS: perform each sprint workout as a circuit. Sprint, then immediately bump down the treadmill speed to follow it with an active recovery walk. Keep the treadmill at a moderate incline for the duration of the workout.

WEEK	ROUNDS	INTENSITY	ACTIVE RECOVERY
1: INTRO	8–12	20-second sprint	40-second walk
2: BASE	12–15	15-second sprint	45-second walk
3: OVERLOAD	10	30-second sprint	90-second walk
4: OVERLOAD	30	10-second sprint	20-second walk
5: OVERLOAD	8–12	20-second sprint	40-second walk
6: OVERLOAD	12–15	15-second sprint	45-second walk

ROWING MACHINE

DIRECTIONS: perform each rowing workout as a circuit; row the indicated amount as fast as possible (AFAP), rest for the indicated amount, then immediately start your next round.

WEEK	ROUNDS	INTENSITY	REST
1: INTRO	5	500m, AFAP	2 minutes
2: BASE	5	500m, AFAP	2 minutes
3: OVERLOAD	5	500m, AFAP	90 seconds
4: OVERLOAD	5	500m, AFAP	90 seconds
5: OVERLOAD	6	500m, AFAP	90 seconds
6: OVERLOAD	6	500m, AFAP	90 seconds



JONATHAN DELGADO

NUTRITION AND SUPPS

At *muscle-fitness.com.au,* you'll find the *M&F* food pyramid, meal plans and supp advice. Instead of the specific supplement stacks, we provided guidelines. Why? Grage explains that the 60 Day Revolution wasn't built to sell you BPI products. "I don't see BPI as just a supplement company," he says. "We're a health and fitness company that helps people transform their lives. Supplements are just one part of the equation. To truly help people achieve their fitness goals we need to arm them with the right tools. That's why BPI partnered with *M&F* on this program. It was a natural fit."

DAY V: CHALLENGE DAY

DIRECTIONS: in each week, perform the challenge workout provided. M&F



KB WINDMILL
Press a kettlebell overhead with your right arm. Stick your right hip out to the side and bend down to touch the floor with your left hand. Repeat on the opposite side.



JAMES GRAGE will be featured in the *60 Days* video series to accompany this program. Follow along as Grage takes regular folks through the 60 Day Revolution and changes their lives forever: *muscle-fitness.com.au*

WEEK 1: KETTLEBELL CIRCUIT

DIRECTIONS: perform the following circuit three times through. Use a 16kg kettlebell and record your total time.

EXERCISES	REPS
Kettlebell swing	20
Clean and press	10
KB windmill	5*
Turkish get-up	5*
Goblet pause squat	10
Russian twist	20

*Each side

WEEK 2: BODY-WEIGHT MAXES

DIRECTIONS: record your total reps for pull-ups and push-ups and total time for V-ups.

EXERCISES	REPS
Pull-up	Max reps in 6 sets
Push-up	Max reps in 6 sets
V-up	50

WEEK 3: TABATA INTERVALS, PART I

DIRECTIONS: perform eight rounds of 20-second intervals with all-out effort, then 10 seconds of rest.

EXERCISES	
Pull-up	Push-up
Sit-up	Inverted row
Lunge	

WEEK 4: TABATA INTERVALS, PART II

DIRECTIONS: perform eight rounds of 20-second intervals with all-out effort, then 10 seconds of rest.

EXERCISES	
Pull-up	Push-up
Sit-up	Inverted row
Lunge	Plank

WEEK 5: 21-15-9

DIRECTIONS: perform three rounds, doing 21 reps of everything in the first round, 15 in the second and nine in the third. Record your time.

EXERCISES	
Inverted row	Kettlebell swing (16kg)
Squat jump	

WEEK 6: COUNTDOWN

DIRECTIONS: work the two exercises as a superset, working from 10 reps down to one. Record your time.

EXERCISES	
Chin-up	Dip

WEEK 7: PUSH-UPS & TUCK JUMP PYRAMIDS

DIRECTIONS: perform three push-ups, then one tuck jump in Round 1. Continue to stack three and one to each subsequent round: six push-ups and two tuck jumps in Round 2, nine push-ups and three tuck jumps in Round 3, etc. Work as high as you can until you reach failure on push-ups, then work backwards, removing three and one in each round until you get back to the reps for Round 1.

WEEK 8: THE 50-REP CLUB

DIRECTIONS: Perform 50 reps for each of the following moves. Use a 16kg kettlebell for the moves that require it. Record your total time.

EXERCISES	
Goblet squat	Kettlebell swing
Inverted row	Kettlebell high pull
Push-up	Decline sit up

JONATHAN DELGADO





MUSCLES IN MOTION

There's muscle control, and then there's **Stephen "tWitch" Boss,** who's popped, locked, and glided his ripped physique into the spotlight as Hollywood's most in-demand dancer, and its most muscular. **BY DELFINA URE /// PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUSTIN SNIPES**

Freestyle hip-hop is to dance what boxing is to sports. It's physically gruelling, improvisational and artistic and most of all, exciting to watch. Right now, Stephen "tWitch" Boss is its Muhammad Ali.

Born and raised in Alabama, US, Boss got his start as so many other young hip-hop dancers do – honing his craft in his room, on the street or any other place he could blast music and move to it. But unlike the case of so many aspiring dancers, Boss saw his dogged determination pay off in the form of ever-escalating opportunities. First came Fox's hit reality TV show *So You Think You Can Dance*, where in 2008 he was the



KETTLEBELL JUMP SQUAT

Hold the kettlebell with both hands under your chin and stand with feet shoulder width apart and toes turned out slightly. Bend your hips back and squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Use the stretch reflex to explosively jump straight up as high as you can. Land softly.

Season 4 runner-up. That success turned into leading roles in *Stomp the Yard 2* and three of the *Step Up* franchise movies. More recently, Boss put his winning moves on display in *Magic Mike XXL*, where he acted alongside this issue's cover guy, Joe Manganiello.

But while it's Boss' dancing that put him in the spotlight, it's his physique that's catching the attention of filmgoers, producers and *Muscle & Fitness* magazine alike.

"It's been a process," says the 32-year-old, "but it really started coming together when I began training for *Magic Mike XXL*."

As in competitive sports, making it in dance requires more than just fancy moves; it also takes focus, strength and a commitment to staying in peak physical condition, all of which made serious weight training a natural transition for Boss. "I enjoy hitting the gym, and I'm not the 'chill in the gym' type. I come in and I do what I need to do," he says. "That's something I used to talk about with Joe [Manganiello] on set. It's about efficiency. I have a 45-minute playlist. I get in there and superset. I don't really socialise in the gym."

For freestyle dancers like Boss, the focus of training is mostly on maximising explosiveness and building core strength. "It's all about the box jumps. If I can get to the highest box it's really fun. The little boy in me loves running and jumping off things." And much like bodybuilders who work towards sculpting their bodies into works of art, Boss executes his workouts with precision to make sure he's building the muscle for what he needs.

"I get big pretty quickly, so I have to monitor how much muscle I put on," says the dancer, whose physically demanding rehearsals are leg workouts in themselves. His lower-body training consists of box jumps, plyometric squats, single-leg squats and training with TRX straps. "That combined with my dance training is enough."

Lower-body strength and upper-body flexibility are key for Boss, along with maintaining a lean, strong physique that allows him to get airborne explosively without being weighed down. "If you're trying to do a wave with your arm and you have to pass

"I'm not the 'chill in the gym' type. I come in and I do what I need to do... It's about efficiency."



SUSPENDED JACKKNIFE
Attach a suspension trainer to a sturdy overhead object and set the foot cradles a foot or so above the floor. Get into push-up position with your feet suspended and brace your abs. Draw your knees to your chest.

by this big ol' rock in the middle of your chest it kind of interrupts the flow," he says. So Boss sticks to training with high reps and very low weight so as not to overdevelop his chest. "Dynamic stretching has also made a world of difference for me because when you're doing explosive moves like jumps, jumps out of turns and drops, it really helps to be flexible."

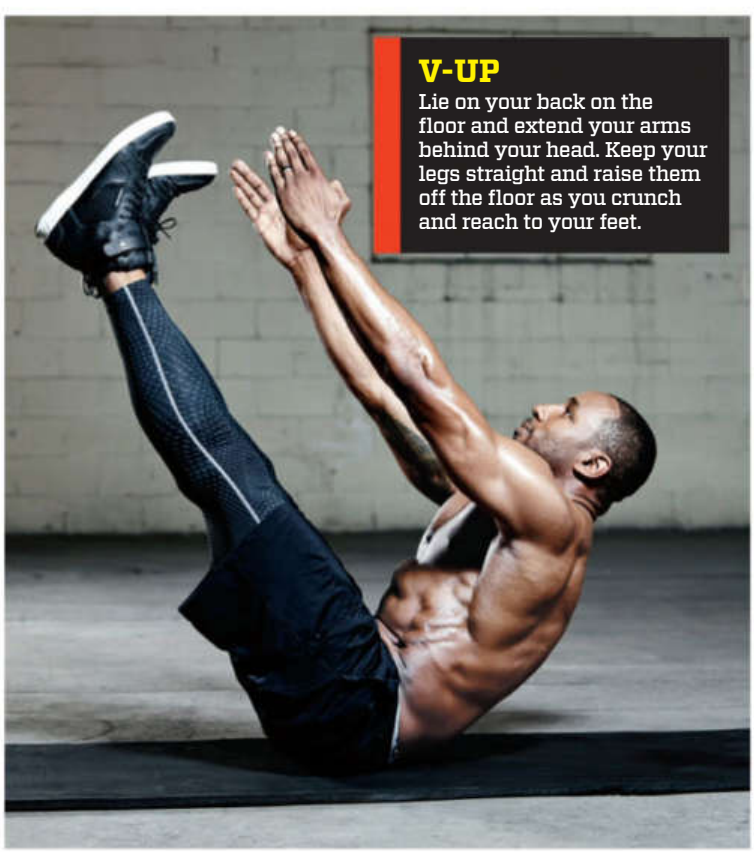
Some dance routines can be as long as 16 minutes, during which he has to jump high and land in difficult positions with seeming ease, or support his entire body weight on one hand while turning, lifting and pulling his limbs in various directions, all in time with music. But beyond his gravity-defying dance skills, one of Boss' greatest strengths is his commitment to eating right – a direct result of his prep for *Magic Mike XXL*.

"It's just like my focus at the gym – I come to work and I come to get down," he says. "With eating right, my body has everything that it needs." Finding the



KETTLEBELL SWING

Hold the bell with both hands and stand with feet shoulder width apart. Bend your hips back to swing the weight between your legs – keep your lower back in its natural arch. Now explosively extend your hips to swing the weight up to eye level.



V-UP

Lie on your back on the floor and extend your arms behind your head. Keep your legs straight and raise them off the floor as you crunch and reach to your feet.



proper diet was the only way Boss could maintain his stamina and perform at his peak throughout the day when he had a rigorous schedule of cardio in the morning followed by long hours on set dancing, and then lifting at night.

"Of course I knew what they were saying about diets, about how much salt you should have, about needing to avoid processed carbs – I knew about it, but I still dabbled," he admits. Of course, knowing what's best doesn't make it easier to do, especially when the results aren't immediate. But with the proper mindset and determination, even the toughest routines and regimens are sustainable. "The moment that I started training for *Magic Mike* and I was strict and actually felt the difference, that's when I started to take dieting seriously."

Boss sticks with high reps and low weight so as not to overdevelop muscles and restrict his flow.

For Boss, it took feeling the response in his body to become a true believer in the importance of eating right. "I've been looking into paleo. I'm not fully paleo yet, but a lot of my diet consists of lean proteins and I've cut out most carbs that are not smart carbs," Boss says. "When I would eat processed carbs in the past I would leave myself so depleted my body would be shaking. But now my body has everything it needs."

Now that his body has adjusted to his diet, he finds that it reacts negatively to the kinds of foods that were once staples. Processed carbs, sugars and fatty foods are a thing of the past for Boss. "I'm from the South – I have a sweet tooth built in!" he says with a laugh, as he admits to his one weakness.

Boss's greatest ah-ha moment relating to his conversion came during a trip back to his hometown in Alabama, where his newfound dietary habits were put to the test. "Trust me, I tried. I thought there was no way I could be

FAST TWITCH Try the routine below for a lean, athletic look. Note that the one-arm press is not shown.



KETTLEBELL FIGURE 8

Pass the kettlebell from one hand to the next between your legs in a figure 8 pattern. Stay low and try to move fluidly. A pass on each side equals one rep.

in Alabama and not have sweet tea. But my stomach took revenge on me and it was awful."

The dancer can now rely on his body to perform at its best no matter what the circumstances, because he's laid a strong foundation for strength and endurance through his training and dietary habits – knowledge he now passes on to Team Street on *So You Think You Can Dance*. "My job is to make sure that they have the best experience possible, since I know what the stress is like between rehearsals and I know that all the things they put in their bodies are going to be key. The further you go in *So You Think You Can Dance* the more mental stamina you have to have, and you can get that from what you eat."

As for Boss' future projects, there are many, but regardless of whether they're in TV, film or onstage, the lessons he's learned in reforming his body for *Magic Mike XXL* are ones he'll be taking with him every step, and hop step, of the way. M&F

THE TWITCH WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Kettlebell jump squat	3	5
One-arm kettlebell press	4	10–15
Kettlebell swing	3	20
Kettlebell figure 8	3	15
Suspended jackknife	3	10–15
V-up	3	10–12

GROOMING BY LEAH GOEDE



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RISE AND DINE

THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY IS NOW THE MOST DELICIOUS. THESE PROTEIN-PACKED RECIPES GUARANTEE YOU'LL START YOUR DAY AHEAD OF THE GAME.

BY MATTHEW KADEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICK FERRARI

MOCHA PANCAKE STACKS

SERVES 4

- ¾ cup oat flour or spelt flour
- ¼ cup plain or vanilla protein powder
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- Salt
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup + 2 tbsp milk or buttermilk
- 1 tbsp instant coffee powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract (omit if using vanilla protein powder)
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- ⅓ cup unsalted nut butter, such as almond, hazelnut or peanut
- ½ cup whipped cream cheese
- 2 cups sliced strawberries

1) In a large bowl, stir together flour, protein powder, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and a couple pinches of salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together egg, milk, coffee powder and vanilla. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients, mix gently. Let batter rest 15 minutes.
2) Melt butter in a frypan over medium heat. Pour ¼ cup batter for each pancake into pan and cook for 2 minutes per side. You should end up with 8 pancakes.
3) Spread 2 tsp nut butter and 1 tbsp whipped cream cheese on each pancake. Top with strawberries.

MACROS PER SERVING

368	20g	28g	22g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT





YOGHURT AND MUESLI

SERVES 2

- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 2 tsp honey
- ½ cup rolled oats
- ¼ cup almonds or pecans, chopped
- 2 tbsp raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- Salt
- 2 tbsp dried cherries
- 2 cups plain low-fat Greek yoghurt

CHEF'S TIP
If you're going gluten-free, you can either choose gluten-free oats or use nutritious quinoa flakes.

1) Heat coconut oil and honey in a frypan over medium heat until melted. Add rolled oats, almonds, pumpkin seeds, cinnamon and a pinch of salt to pan and heat until oats are toasted, about 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in cherries and spread mixture on a baking tray to cool.
2) Divide yoghurt among serving bowls and top with muesli.

MACROS PER SERVING

465	29g	44g	21g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

CHEF'S TIP
Using frozen fruit and a low amount of liquid helps make your smoothie deliciously thick and spoonable.

BLUEBERRY PROTEIN SMOOTHIE BOWL

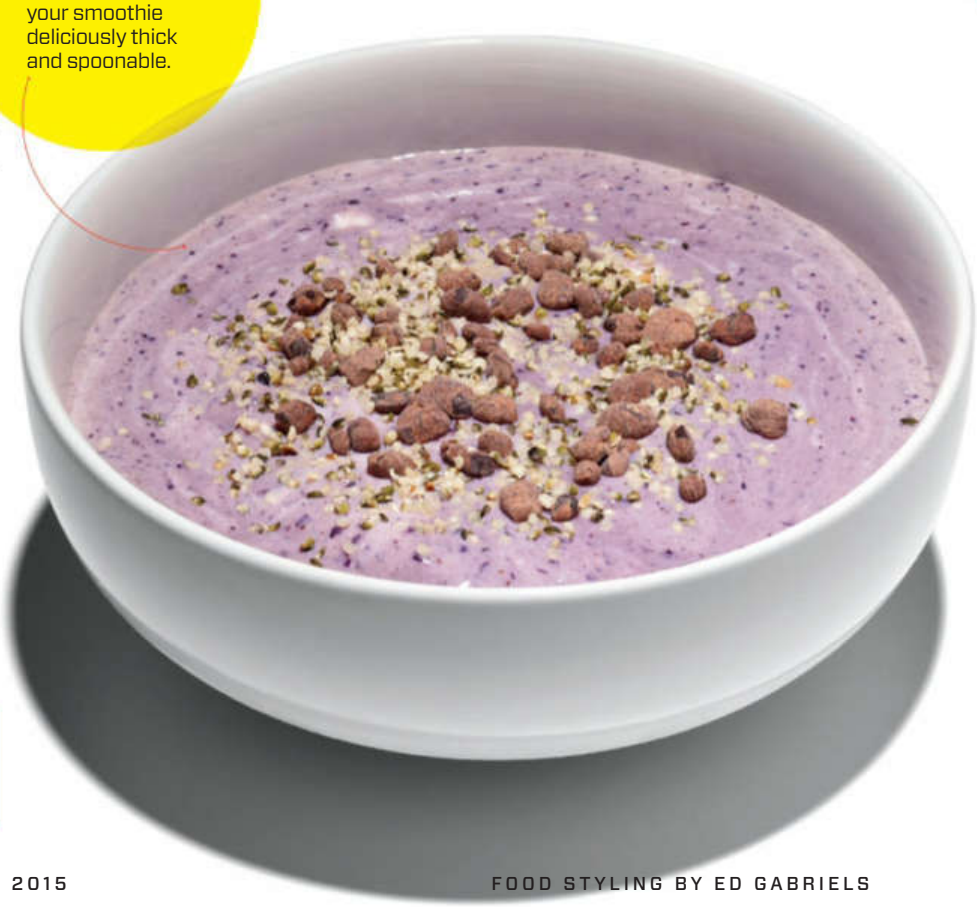
SERVES 1

- ¼ cup milk
- ⅓ cup plain Greek yoghurt
- 1 scoop plain or vanilla protein powder
- 1 medium-size frozen banana, chopped
- ½ cup frozen blueberries
- 1 tsp fresh ginger
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp almond extract (optional)
- 2 tbsp hemp seeds (hemp hearts)
- 1 tbsp cacao nibs (optional)

1) Place milk, yoghurt, protein powder, banana, blueberries, ginger, cinnamon and almond extract in a blender and blend into a thick, smooth mixture. Add a bit more milk if needed to help with blending.
2) Place blueberry mixture in a bowl and top with hemp seeds and cacao nibs.

MACROS PER SERVING

382	45g	44g	10g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT



FOOD STYLING BY ED GABRIELS



CHEF'S TIP
For perfect hard-boiled eggs, place eggs in a medium-size saucepan and bring water to a boil. Once water is at a rumble, remove pan from heat and let eggs stand covered for 15 minutes. Plunk eggs in an ice-water bath and then peel.

DAYBREAK EGG TACOS

SERVES 2

- 4 large hard-boiled eggs
- 1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 plum (roma) tomato, diced
- 1 small red capsicum, chopped
- ¾ tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ½ cup low-fat sour cream
- ½ avocado
- Juice of ½ lime
- 4 small corn tortillas, preferably warmed in the microwave
- ¼ cup chopped fresh coriander

1) Place peeled eggs in a large bowl and roughly mash with a fork. Stir in beans, tomato, red capsicum, paprika and salt.
2) Place sour cream, avocado and lime juice in a blender and blend until smooth.
3) Divide egg mixture among tortillas and top with avocado sauce and coriander.

MACROS PER SERVING

518	25g	59g	23g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT



Creole gumbo with red beans and rice



EAT CARBS WITHOUT FEAR

Five meals that you'll think are cheats – but are really great for fuelling your workouts.

For too long, carbohydrates has been a bad word. We've embraced the idea that cutting out most forms of carbs from our diets will help us lose weight and build muscle. And certainly, eliminating the most processed forms – white flour, white rice, plain pasta – can go a long way towards helping you reach your fat-loss goals. But as an active man, you can't afford to fear carbohydrates. In fact, the right type and amount can make a huge difference in your training and your results.

"Muscle glycogen, or stored carbs, is the No. 1 fuel source used during high-intensity training sessions, so it's important to have enough in your diet to get you through your workouts," notes Christian Coates, founder of Soulmate Food in the UK, which seeks to blend functional, fitness-friendly food with high-level cuisine; and author of *Soulmate Food Fitness Gourmet*. Post-workout, carbs help restore muscle glycogen and even give your immune system a boost.

The key, of course, is knowing which carbs to embrace and which to avoid. While all carbs increase blood-sugar levels, high-fibre, lower-sugar foods slow this reaction. Opt for non-refined whole-grain carbs such as bulgur wheat, quinoa, sweet potatoes and brown rice. And make sure to balance meals with lean protein and healthy fats, adds Coates.

These recipes, developed by Coates, highlight carbs that are low on the glycaemic index and are packed with nutrients. They're perfect to fuel you up for your workouts and aid in recovery – especially on hard-training days when your body needs that extra edge.

TIP: glycaemic index (GI), a measure of how high blood sugar rises and how long it remains high, depends on the quality and quantity of carbs you eat. In most cases, lower GI foods are better – except post-workout, when higher GI foods can replenish muscle glycogen stores.

RECIPES BY CHRISTIAN COATES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MOYA MCALLISTER
FOOD STYLING BY DANA BONAGURA



Creole gumbo with red beans and rice

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

Because its outer layers are kept intact, the brown rice found in this Louisiana favourite is teeming with nutrients, including manganese, selenium and phosphorus. A simple swap to brown rice from white rice packs a plate with high-quality carbs for lasting energy.

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup long-grain brown rice
- ⅔ cup cooked kidney beans, rinsed
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- 1¼ chicken stock cubes
- 2 tsp vegetable oil, plus 1 tsp
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 green capsicums, sliced
- 2 sticks celery, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ cup saucisson or salami, skin removed and diced
- 2 tsp Cajun seasoning
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 10 king prawns
- ½ tsp Tabasco hot-pepper sauce
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

DIRECTIONS

1 Cook brown rice according to package directions; when almost done, add beans for final few minutes of cooking. Drain rice and beans; return to pan with scallions; stir. Set aside.
2 Meanwhile, bring 1¼ cups water to boil in a pan. Using a handheld blender, mix in stock, then add another 1¼ cups water to make stock. Remove from heat.
3 Heat 2 tsp vegetable oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add flour and stir in oil until a paste forms. Continue cooking, stirring until golden brown. Remove from heat.
4 Add a little chicken stock to pan; stir until combined to make sauce. Repeat, adding a little stock at a time until all liquid is combined. (If lumpy, pulse with hand blender.)
5 Heat a deep frying pan on high heat; add 1 tsp oil. Add onion, capsicum, celery and garlic; cook 2–3 minutes, then add saucisson and dry spices; stir 1 minute.
6 Add prawns and sauce. Then add Tabasco and Worcestershire sauces and bring to a boil. Simmer for 3–4 minutes and serve with rice and beans.

PER SERVING

Calories: 586, Fat: 29g, Sat. fat: 8g, Carbs: 59g, Fibre: 8g, Protein: 22g

Grilled chicken breast with pesto bulgur-wheat salad and crumbled feta

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

Bulgur wheat is a Middle Eastern staple with half the calories of quinoa but a greater percentage of fibre per calorie. That makes it a great grain for controlling hunger without bringing your carb count astronomically high.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small or ½ large sweet potato, peeled and diced
- ½ cup bulgur wheat, uncooked
- 2 115g chicken breasts
- 1 ear corn
- 1 medium to large carrot, peeled
- 1 small zucchini
- ⅛ cup jarred pesto
- 1½ cups sundried tomatoes
- 40g low-fat feta

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 175°C. Place sweet potato on baking tray and roast for about 20 minutes, or until tender.
2 Cook bulgur wheat according to directions; drain and let cool.
3 Meanwhile, place chicken in a heated frying pan coated with cooking spray and heat until golden brown on each side, turning halfway through. Transfer chicken to baking tray and roast for 10–12 minutes until fully cooked.
4 Boil corn on the cob in water for about 5 minutes or until tender. Set aside and let cool.
5 Using a mandoline or spiralser, slice carrot and zucchini into long, noodlelike strips.
6 Once bulgur wheat is cool, mix in pesto and divide over two plates. Layer carrot and zucchini noodles on top of bulgur wheat.
7 Cut kernels from cobs and roughly chop sundried tomatoes, then scatter over noodles. Slice chicken and place on top. Garnish with crumbled feta.

PER SERVING

Calories: 590, Fat: 16g, Sat. fat: 3g, Carbs: 73.5g, Fibre: 7.5g, Protein: 38g

SuperGreen candy salad with mango and pomegranate

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

Quinoa, the king of carbs, is a great alternative to typical grains like wheat, oats and barley. What sets quinoa apart is its amino-acid profile, which yields a whopping 24 grams of complete protein per cup. Quinoa also contains high levels of heart-healthy essential fatty acids, such as ALA and oleic acid. Plus, its high fibre content (12g per cup) makes it a low glycaemic-index source of energy – perfect for fuelling longer workouts.

INGREDIENTS

Dressing

60g baby leaf spinach
2 tsp mint
2 tsp fresh coriander
1 large spring onion
¼ red chilli
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

Salad

¾ cup quinoa, uncooked
85g chicken breast
Salt and black pepper, to taste
Extra-virgin olive oil, for oiling
¼ cup edamame, shelled
4 Peppadew peppers, quartered (can also use chopped or jarred red capsicum)
½ cup mango, peeled and cut into chunks
3 tbsp pomegranate seeds
3 tbsp candy stripe beetroot, peeled and finely sliced (can also use normal beetroot)
3 tbsp golden or regular beetroot, peeled and finely sliced
30g low-fat feta cheese

DIRECTIONS

1 Place all dressing ingredients in a blender and purée.
2 Cook quinoa according to package directions, then drain and cool.
3 Slice chicken breast along its length to get a butterflied joint. Season with salt and pepper and cook in an oiled pan over medium heat for 4 minutes on each side.
4 Remove from heat and shred chicken.
5 In a large bowl, mix dressing with cooked quinoa. Toss vegetables and fruits together and mix; then crumble in feta.
6 To serve, divide among four plates and top with shredded chicken.

PER SERVING

Calories: 547, Fat: 24g, Sat. fat: 3.5g, Carbs: 81g, Fibre: 10.5g, Protein: 35g









TIP:
you don't need to consume loads of healthy carbs at every meal for the sustained reduction in blood glucose levels, thanks to the "second meal" effect that low GI foods create. Just one low GI food per meal is enough.



Find delicious recipes like these and more in *Soulmate Food Fitness Gourmet*, which features in-depth nutritional information and diet plans for specific goals, from losing weight to building muscle to finding balance.

Salmon with saffron tomatoes, fennel and sweet potato

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

Sweet potato trumps the rest of the carb field based on its high vitamin A content and relatively lower carb count. Plus, its high levels of soluble fibre help control blood sugar and slow digestion so you feel satisfied longer.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fennel
- 1 medium red onion
- 1 small to medium zucchini
- 2 small sweet potatoes or 1 large, peeled
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes
- 2 115g salmon fillets
- ⅓ cup sugar snap peas
- Handful of parsley

Sauce

- 1 clove garlic
- ½ tsp fennel seeds
- 2 sprigs thyme
- Small pinch of saffron
- ½ tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp agave syrup
- ½ tsp vegetable stock powder
- ⅔ cup water
- ⅓ cup tomato purée

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 220°C.
2 Chop fennel, red onion, zucchini and peeled sweet potato into wedges, then roast for 30 minutes or until golden. Roast cherry tomatoes at the same temperature for 10 minutes.
3 Roast salmon at 175°C for 10–15 minutes until cooked.
4 Meanwhile, make sauce: cook chopped garlic, fennel seeds, thyme and saffron in vegetable oil on low to medium heat for a few minutes. Add agave, vegetable stock, water, and tomato purée; cook for 5 minutes.
5 To assemble, toss roasted vegetables in some of the tomato sauce. Place them on a plate, then top with roasted salmon and drizzle with remaining sauce. Garnish with peas and chopped parsley.

PER SERVING

Calories: 331, Fat: 8.5g, Sat. fat: 3g; Carbs: 49g, Fibre: 10g, Protein: 30g



Sesame black noodles with soy and ginger tofu

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

Black rice noodles are a bit exotic but worth hunting down in the specialty-food aisle. They look great and are filled with key nutrients, including fibre, protein, iron and antioxidants. But if you can't find them, you can also use brown rice noodles. The dressing recipe makes more than you need, so freeze the leftovers in an ice cube tray and defrost each cube as needed for dressing on salads.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium carrot
- 5 large spears of asparagus
- 1 small red chilli pepper, sliced
- 3 spring onions
- 45g baby corn
- 170g extra-firm tofu, cut into strips
- 85g black rice noodles, uncooked
- 1 tsp coconut or canola oil
- 1 cup baby spinach
- ⅓ cup edamame
- ⅓ cup sugar snap peas
- 1½ tsp mixed black and white sesame seeds
- 1 tsp mint leaves
- 2 tsp pickled ginger, cut into matchsticks
- 30g cashew nuts

Ginger soy dressing (makes jarful)

- ½ cup stem ginger in syrup (or ½ cup fresh ginger slices in a tbsp of agave syrup)
- 5 tbsp lemon juice
- Thumb of fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
- 5 tbsp soy sauce
- ⅔ cup extra-virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1 Peel carrot with a vegetable peeler, then use peeler to make carrot "ribbons"; place in a large bowl.
2 Remove woody bottoms from asparagus and use peeler to create asparagus ribbons, adding to carrots.
3 Slice red chilli pepper and onions on an angle. Add to bowl with corn.
4 Make dressing: grate ginger and combine with lemon juice, passing through a sieve. Add soy sauce and oil and mix together. Set aside.
5 Marinate tofu in the dressing for 20 minutes before cooking.
6 Bring a pan of water to boil and cook rice noodles for 8 minutes.
7 Add oil to a large frypan or wok; stir-fry tofu for 1–2 minutes.
8 When noodles are cooked, drain and mix with prepared vegies. Add other ingredients, then top with tablespoon dressing. Mix well. Divide between two bowls; top with tofu and serve. MRF

PER SERVING (WITHOUT DRESSING)

Calories: 453, Fat: 18g, Sat. fat: 4g, Carbs: 55g, Fibre: 8g, Protein: 22g

Being shot and losing a leg would have ruined many men's lives. But it spurred British soldier **Mark Smith** to new heights.

BY JOHN PLUMMER /// PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER BAILEY

FIGHTING BACK

In every gym there are people with remarkable stories; men and women who have overcome adversity to build impressive physiques. But you'd have to travel far and wide to find someone with a tale to match that of Mark Smith's, a man whose ordinary name belies extraordinary achievements.

In 2011, Smith was preparing to return to Afghanistan to serve the British army. A soldier since the age of 18, he was already a veteran of campaigns in Bosnia and Iraq and was now getting ready for a second tour of Afghanistan.

During a routine firearms exercise a fusillade of bullets rained through a wall he was standing against and struck him several times in the leg and shoulder.

Smith had to be resuscitated six times and spent several days on life support. When he finally regained consciousness a surgeon greeted him with the news: "We take your leg today or you don't see tomorrow." The bullets had ruptured the large femoral artery in his thigh, causing a build-up of toxins that were causing organ failure.

Even for someone as naturally upbeat as Smith, it was shattering news. He shed a few tears but within days he was back to his positive self. "I was surrounded by lads who were missing both legs or paralysed," he says. "I felt my injury was just a scratch in comparison and lucky that I was still alive to be a dad and husband."

Recovery was slow and required 10 weeks of going "nil by mouth", unable to eat solid food. His physique, built on daily physical training in the army and evening gym workouts, was wasting away.

When he could eat again, regular doses of morphine had killed his appetite. "Everything tasted metallic," he recalls. "I had to wear a nasal tube to keep my calories up but the weight fell off me. I lost over 20kg and dropped to about 60kg. I looked really ill and as someone who had always enjoyed the gym, it got to me."



Guest posing at the 2015 BodyPowerPro in Birmingham, UK.

TOTAL REBUILD

Smith started working out again when he was still in a wheelchair. "All I wanted to do was train so that I never looked that ill again," he says. "The gym became my escape and the one place I felt at home."

As his physique broadened so did his ambitions. "I wanted to do something that would still challenge me physically," he says. "I needed an adrenaline rush; something to motivate me and give my life some routine again. I found that with bodybuilding."

Intense training, routine and discipline came naturally to a military man and when his prosthetic limb was fitted, he wanted the goal of getting on stage in a competition. In November last year he entered – and won – his first contest for amputees. He'd found something to replicate the thrill of being in the forces.

Smith, 30, has now won four out of five contests, including the Hercules Olympia in the UK and the adaptive division at the Phil Heath Classic in America where he even got to pose with four-time Mr Olympia Heath.

He was invited to perform a guest spot at this year's BodyPower Pro in the UK, a show that also included a wheelchair contest. Smith is passionate about promoting disability bodybuilding and with the help of forces' charities, social media, event promoters and other disabled athletes the number of opportunities to get on stage is increasing.

"New lads are coming forward, unaware it existed," says Smith. "If we carry on making rapid progress then I believe there will be a pro category, fit to open any show. I have already been fortunate enough to enjoy some amazing opportunities, such as competing in America, and there's no reason why anyone in the category couldn't do the same."



ADAPTIVE TRAINING

Many people are surprised Smith is able to train his lower body but he makes a special effort to develop his left leg. "I'm well aware that when I step on stage people's eyes will naturally be drawn to

SNAPSHOT

NAME: Mark Smith

AGE: 30

PLACE OF BIRTH: London, UK

LIVES: Milton Keynes

HEIGHT: 183 cm

WEIGHT: 83 kg contest weight

CAREER HIGHLIGHT: Posing with Mr Olympia Phil Heath on stage at the Phil Heath Classic in the US.

AMBITION: To follow in the footsteps of Simon Robinson, the only amputee to have guest posed on the Olympia stage, and to help create a pro division for amputee bodybuilders.

SPONSORS: Sci-MX Nutrition.

CONTACT: Twitter @MarkSmithBB

“I NEEDED AN ADRENALINE RUSH; SOMETHING THAT WOULD CHALLENGE ME PHYSICALLY AND GIVE MY LIFE SOME ROUTINE AGAIN.”

my prosthetic leg so when they see my good leg, I want them to see how hard I have worked on it.” It does, however, pose challenges. His prosthesis has a pressure limit of 150kg, including body weight, so he usually removes it and does heavy single leg movements.

“I hack squat and Smith machine squat although my balance isn’t good enough to squat in a normal rack,” he says. “I leg press, plus I make use of the seated kit for leg extensions, leg curls and calf raises. I’m happy to give anything a go; I want to be as able bodied as possible.

He says the gunshot wound to his shoulder actually affects him more. “I am missing an anterior deltoid, which causes some pain when overhead shoulder pressing or incline bench pressing,” he says. “But I still do them.”

Cardio is also challenging, and has led to some amusing experiments. “Walking for prolonged periods is uncomfortable because the exit wound scarring on my leg rubs on the socket of my prosthesis,” he says. ‘So I’ve tried hopping on crutches, which works OK. I’ve also tried one-legged jumping on a children’s trampoline but that was short lived! Now I have settled on using a hand bike and swimming.”

Smith’s attitude, not to mention his physique, has impressed and inspired thousands of people around the world. Few bodybuilders have felt more love from the crowd. “In all my competitions so far, the compère has talked about my background,” he says. “After the audience has heard about me, it really gets behind me and it’s such an overwhelming, rewarding feeling. It’s that response that makes all those months of dieting and training worthwhile.”

His efforts have also struck a chord closer to home with his two sons. “They’ve seen me get on with life despite what happened,” he says. “They see me eat healthily and they see someone who is dedicated and won’t give up. These are the sorts of values I want my children to grow up with: to be determined and committed and work hard, no matter what.” M&F





SMITH’S LEG ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Leg extensions	5	15
Single leg hack squats	4	12
Leg press	4	12
Single leg Smith machine squats	4	12
Leg curls	4	12
Seated calf raises	4	12
Single leg standing calf raises	4	12

DAILY DIET

Meal 1: oats and protein shake

Meal 2: (after training) oats and protein shake

Meal 3: 100g chicken, 100g rice and 1 cup full of salad

Meal 4: 100g chicken, 100g rice and 1 cup full of salad

Meal 5: 100g chicken, 100g rice and 1 cup full of salad

Meal 6: 100g chicken and 1 cup full of salad

Meal 7: 100g chicken and 1 cup full of salad

Meal 8: protein shake

MUD, SWEAT & TEARS

GET READY TO PUT YOUR BODY TO THE TEST AGAINST TOUGH TERRAIN AND ELEMENTS WITH OUR FOUR-WEEK MUD RUN TRAINING PLAN.

BY SCOTT HERMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR ARTIGA





WAKE UP, EAT, COMMUTE, work... Wake up, eat, commute, work... What happened to us? When did daily life become a metaphorical treadmill? When did the idea of working out become a literal one? Pushing your body's limits isn't something inherently dangerous; it's what we need, and it's what your body is craving whether you realise it or not. There's nothing like the feeling of exhilaration and accomplishment that can only come from leaving it all on the floor. An adventure race like a Tough Mudder can give you just that, but before you sign up, we've got the training program you need so you can tackle the course with proficiency – whether you're an adventure race rookie or a grizzled veteran.

In order to achieve your ultimate goal – which might be as simple as completing the course – preparation is key. No matter what race you participate in, you'll be required to complete a variety of obstacles in which your strength, agility and endurance will be put to the test. This includes running through mud, carrying heavy objects, crawling on all fours under barbed wire, dragging rocks, swimming, climbing over 10-foot walls and, in some cases, being (slightly) electrocuted at the finish line. Whatever the variables might be, training hard is the only way to make it through intact (more or less).

THE ADVENTURE RACE WORKOUT

The best way to train for adventure racing is to follow a routine that will challenge your strength and explosive power while simultaneously testing your cardiovascular endurance. This four-week program is designed to do exactly that. Ideally, you should perform some of the routines outside to replicate the conditions of an actual race, but if that's not a possibility, you can easily perform the entire program at your local gym. All you need is a timer and a few dumbbells. To train all energy systems, each day will focus on something different. Day 1 features Tabata-style circuits, Day 2 is pure strength training, Days 3 and 7 are active recovery, Day 4 is HIIT, Day 5 is high-volume training and Day 6 is steady-state cardio via a long-distance run.



DAY I **Tabata circuits**

DIRECTIONS: all Tabata circuits are done for 20 seconds on, 10 seconds off for the prescribed number of rounds. The number of rounds varies by week.

EXERCISES
Sit-through
Mountain climber
Crunch
Renegade row

DAY I WORKOUT

WEEK	ROUNDS	TOTAL TIME
ONE	5	10 min
TWO	6	12 min
THREE	8	16 min
FOUR	10	20 min

DAY II **Strength**

DIRECTIONS: in Week 1, rest 2½ minutes between sets. Cut 30 seconds off your rest time each week. In Week 2, rest 2 minutes, and so on.

DAY II WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Deadlift	5	12, 10, 8, 6, 4
Push press	5	12, 10, 8, 6, 4
Sandbag walking lunge	5	15 each side
SUPERSET WITH Pull-up	5	15, 12, 10, 8, 6
Box jump	5	15
Dip	5	15, 12, 10, 8, 6

SANDBAG WALKING LUNGE

Lift up a heavy sandbag and then place it on your right shoulder. Next, step forward with your right leg while simultaneously lowering your body to the ground. Make sure that as you lower yourself you form 90-degree angles with your knees and your front knee does not pass your toes. Once fully descended, begin to step forward by pushing through your front heel and toes of your back foot and repeat with your left leg.

DAYS III & VII **Active recovery**

Perform 30 to 60 minutes of leisure activity such as walking, jogging, stretching, foam rolling, etc.

GROOMING BY CHRISTIE CAIOLA



BOX JUMP

Begin with your feet shoulder width apart, standing tall in front of a box or bench. Drop your hips back and lower your arms as you squat. Once ready, explode through your legs and hips and quickly extend your arms up over your head for extra momentum. As you land on the box, plant your heels down firmly and absorb the landing by squatting. Next, stand up tall on top of the box and then step down carefully and repeat.



SIT-THROUGH

From a push-up position bring your right knee in towards your chest while lifting your left arm off the ground, and sit so your chest is facing to the left. Kick your free leg out straight. Return to the push-up position and repeat on the opposite side.



RENEGADE ROW

Get down into a push-up position while holding a dumbbell in each hand. Once in place, perform a push-up. As soon as you return to the starting position, row each dumbbell once before completing the next push-up.

DAY IV **Overload**

DIRECTIONS: perform all Day IV workouts in this order.

HIIT Part I:
12 minutes

Circuit I

HIIT Part II:
12 minutes (same as Part I)

Circuit II

DAY IV HIIT PART I

WEEK	WALK (In seconds)	JOG (In seconds)
ONE	60	30
TWO	60	60
THREE	60	90
FOUR	60	120

CIRCUIT I

DIRECTIONS: perform the following exercises as a circuit. See Day IV Circuit Chart for reps.

EXERCISES
Dumbbell deadlift to overhead press
Dumbbell Russian twist

CIRCUIT II

DIRECTIONS: perform the following exercises as a circuit. See Day IV Circuit Chart for rounds and reps.

EXERCISES
Burpee
Alternating toe touch
Kettlebell swing

DAY IV CIRCUIT CHART

WEEK	ROUNDS	REPS
ONE	2	12
TWO	2	15
THREE	3	12
FOUR	3	15



DUMBBELL RUSSIAN TWIST

Sit on the floor and lean back so you're balancing on your glutes. Hold a dumbbell or medicine ball with both hands and begin to rotate side to side. Drive your elbows back as far as you can with each rotation to maximise core engagement.



ALTERNATING TOE TOUCH

Lie flat on the ground with your arms out to your sides and your feet together. Raise your left arm and right leg at the same time to touch. Repeat on the opposite side.

GET MORE Scott Herman designs custom training programs for adventure racers. Go to ***youtube.com /ScottHermanFitness*** for more workouts and tips.



SPIDERMAN PUSH-UP

Lower yourself to a push-up position. Next, begin to perform a traditional push-up. While you're descending, bring your right knee to your right elbow. As soon as your knee touches your elbow, return to the starting position and repeat on the other side.

DAY V
Total-body circuit

DIRECTIONS: see the Day V Rep Chart for the round and rep counts. Rest only at the end of each circuit.

EXERCISES

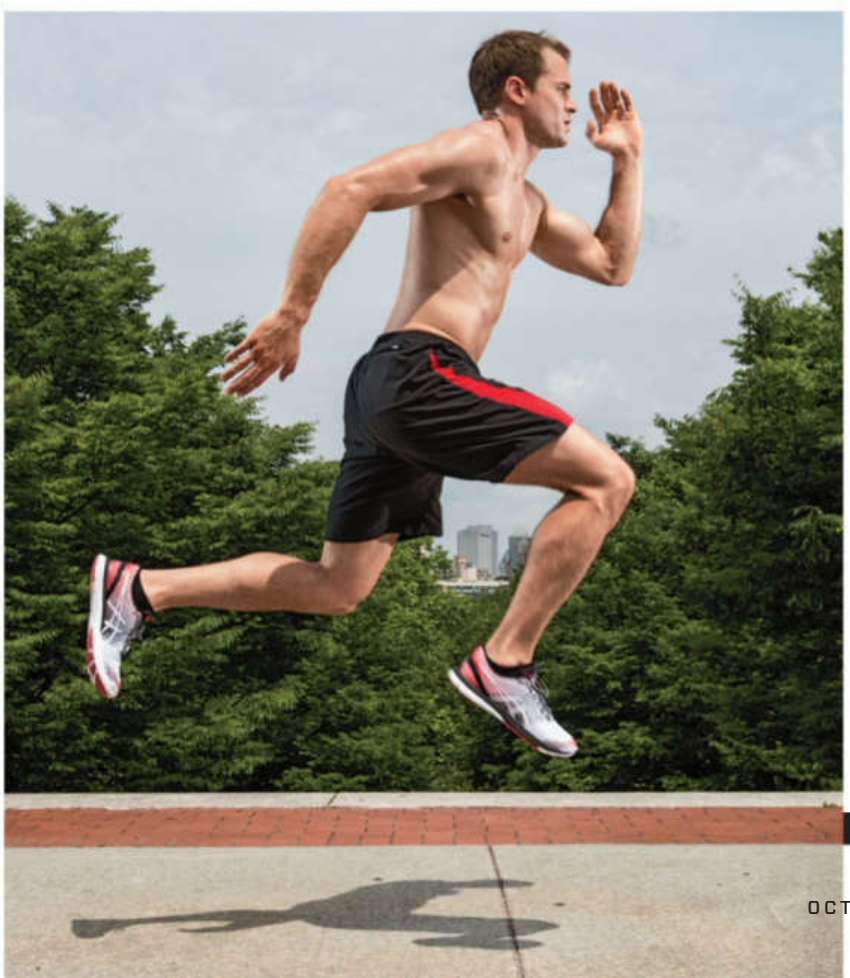
Spiderman push-up
Pull-up
Dip
Alternating jump lunge
Hanging leg raise

DAY V REP CHART

WEEK	ROUNDS	REPS	REST
ONE	4	8	60 SEC
TWO	4	10	60 SEC
THREE	5	10	45 SEC
FOUR	5	12	45 SEC

DAY VI
Long-distance run

DIRECTIONS: run 6 to 12 kilometres. This is preferably done outside but can be done on a treadmill.



ALTERNATING JUMP LUNGE

Jump in the air and land in a lunge position with your right foot forward and a 90-degree bend in both knees. Descend as far as you can and then explosively jump back into the air and land with your left foot forward and repeat. M&F



THE PINNACLE OF POWER

In Part Two of our powerlifting special, we take a look at how the sport has evolved, and why it's here to stay.

BY DAVID ROBSON

PART 2



PHOTO CREDIT: CASEY GROVES PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW ZEALAND POWERLIFTING, MELISSA MCGREGOR, KEITH MILLER

Kiwi powerlifting champion John Strachan at the 2015 Auckland Powerlifting Championships, where he won the overall title.

The most impressive part of a powerlifter's training mission is the contest itself – it's during a powerlifting event that maximal lifts are recorded and the best athletes are officially determined. Battling earth-jarring-weights for many months is done in an attempt to ensure the powerlifter builds a foundation with which to out-lift the competition come game day. While in the gym, in relaxed company, a powerlifter may find the strength to obliterate previous personal bests, it's in the heat of battle that a competitor's ability to overcome immense pressure to reign victorious over the iron is revealed.

Though certain "push/pull" events feature only the bench or the squat, most powerlifting contests expect all lifters to hoist maximal weights on the bench, squat and deadlift (in this order). Each competitor has three chances to hit their highest number on each lift, the best of which is included in their competition total, which is, in turn, pitted against the scores of others in their respective classes.

Though the event rules and scoring systems of a veritable alphabet soup of powerlifting organisations may differ marginally, competitors are universally judged against others of the same gender, weight class and age. Most lifters will compete in one of several weight classes: from up to 53kg (sub-junior/junior) through to 120kg-plus for men, and up to 43kg (sub-junior/junior) through to 84kg-plus for women. Age categories are included for sub-juniors (15-18), juniors (19-23), open (any age), and masters (40-plus).

MIND OVER MUSCLE

Moments before attempting each lift (each separated by as much as 20 minutes while the competition takes their turn) a powerlifter will begin psyching up for their own personal battle of mind over muscle. With body fully rested and thoughts focused on victory a competitor may calmly visualise a successful lift before sharply switching to full mental arousal through whichever legal means possible – full-force punches to the face or more merciful back-slapping are not unheard of and, in some quarters, par for the course. Then it's show time. As the competitor, mummy-like in full lifting regalia, approaches the rack, platform or bench with the grace of an elephant on Adderall, all judges' eyes will be upon him. Perfect lifting technique, at this critical point, is paramount. Whether the weight is successfully "lifted" means nothing; what really counts is whether it's done so in accordance with the exact technical parameters each athlete must adhere to. Faltering form means a failure to achieve three white lights: the universal sign that the lift has officially been achieved.

To increase their chances of white-lighting it, elite powerlifters employ a variety of methods.

"Lifting heavy weights is scary, so you've got to beat those demons first and get that self-doubt out of your mind," says Kiwi lifting sensation John Strachan. "Every lifter fails at some point, but you'll fail much more often with a negative attitude. Lifters that have more confidence are generally the ones at the top."

Two-time world powerlifting champion Brett Gibbs, also from New Zealand, is a big believer in visualising the perfect lift: "I think about exactly how the lift will look before I even walk out to the platform," says the current NZ 83kg-class raw squat record-holder (280kg). "If you can't do this, then the lift won't happen."

Australian and current junior world champion John Paul Cauchi believes the methodical approach works best for him. "I don't listen to music, use ammonia or need back slaps," he says. "I'll go to the back of the platform, take a couple of big breaths, let out a big scream, and then go through the motions as if it's training."



New Zealand Powerlifting Federation President Steve Lousich practising what he preaches.

Above: Aussie junior powerlifting sensation and IPF Junior World Champion John Paul Cauchi challenging the big guns at the 2014 IPF Asia/Oceania Championships.
Below: New Zealand Junior World Raw lifting champion (2014) and two-time Oceania champion Brett Gibbs competing at the 2014 IPF Asian/Oceania Championships.

PHOTO CREDIT: CASEY GROVES PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW ZEALAND POWERLIFTING, MELISSA MCGREGOR, KEITH MILLER



How strong a powerlifter is in the days leading up to a big event is of little consequence if their mind isn't right on the day. To "lose it" mentally could result in what is colloquially referred to as "bombing" – a failure to make the lift. According to Strachan, retaining strength going into a meet requires a consistent approach to powering up: "You've got to focus on building a better, stronger version of yourself every day," he says. "The rest will take care of itself. And you must compete to get stronger. The 'I'm not strong enough to compete yet' excuse is invalid. Lifters who compete get stronger faster than the ones that don't - it's that simple."

"Being consistent and knowing it's going to take time and hard work is the key," says Gibbs. "Competing is all about being confident in how the build-up has been. You must know you're going to give it your all. Visualise what you've set out to achieve."

Cauchi believes powerlifting success to be a simple process of designing a program and following it. "The hard part is the consistency and program adherence," he says.

Powerlifters, as a rule, are extremely confident individuals – with titanic weights pressing down on your spine, a little self-belief does not go astray. Such confidence may pose a problem for some, according to Powerlifting Australia's Robert Wilks. "You get a bit of ego," he says. "Lifters think of themselves as champions and may become inwardly focused. They may analyse their own performance and think they're top performers when they are, in fact, D grade lifters."

His solution to becoming stronger in training and performing on the day of the event is to enlist legitimate training support and to become part of a broader powerlifting community.

RAW OR MORE?

Up until recent years powerlifting had become as much a battle of technology as one of pure muscle power. Lifting suits of varying strengths and degrees of flexibility, knee wraps to stop joints from crumbling under immense loads, and all manner of assistive devices (not to mention drugs – both stimulating and strengthening) were, and still are, being sought to gain the lifting edge. According to Wilks, "guys would be benching 700 pounds with the bar stuck in mid-air because the shirt was so tight. It was just getting out of hand." In 2012 the International Powerlifting Federation introduced raw, or unequipped, lifting (placing severe restrictions on the use of supportive equipment such as suits and wraps) and this, says New Zealand Powerlifting Federation President Steve Lousich, "opened the door for many lifters and made the sport more affordable and competitive." Says Wilks: "around three years ago there was a tipping point for powerlifting worldwide. So we included two divisions: equipped and raw. At first I thought it'd take over a decade for raw lifting to come through and take over. But within three months powerlifting become about 95 percent raw.

This opened doors. Before, power-lifters were viewed as a strange cult. Guys would be in the gym and they would see a couple of powerlifters in the corner wearing this weird stuff, looking like Egyptian mummies squatting 300kgs – impressive in its own weird way, but nothing to do with the average lifter. Now people see powerlifters squatting 150kgs raw and think that perhaps they can compete and achieve something of their own."

Though he often competes equipped, Cauchi believes "the introduction of raw has been excellent for the growth of the sport. Compared to equipped, raw is more accessible, cheaper and easier to learn."

Says Gibbs: "equipped lifting meets are a lot harder, that's for sure. However, I enjoy raw lifting now and I believe this really shows who the strongest athletes are. It's the future of powerlifting."

"If raw powerlifting was available from day one, I definitely would have favoured it to equipped lifting to forgo the massive learning curve that you need to go through with the equipment," says Strachan. "If you're looking at getting into powerlifting, start raw, and if you want an extra challenge down the line and are in the right environment, try equipped."

Aside from the different competitive options its current and prospective athletes have, powerlifting, as a training modality and way of life, can provide numerous health benefits. Moving massive amounts of iron on a regular basis breeds confidence in one's ability to handle difficult tasks; an activity as mentally demanding as powerlifting builds character and strengthens both mind and muscles. By incorporating cardio for fitness and improved muscle endurance, and additional "auxiliary" movements to strengthen supporting muscle groups, the powerlifter becomes both prodigiously strong and well-rounded athletically. Setting strength goals and incrementally pushing one's physical and mental capabilities provides a challenge that an increasing number of powerlifters find alluring. The sport becomes addictive. "Powerlifting is fun and it provides many health benefits," says Wilks. "Whole body exercises have been shown to have the most positive effect on diabetes, osteoporosis and obesity. There's also a sense of camaraderie among powerlifters that many find appealing."

FEEL THE POWER

Despite a vastly more eclectic range of fitness and sporting options for the public to choose from, powerlifting, with its unapologetically old-school ethos, has held its own and indeed has continued to attract new generations to the platform.

"Powerlifting's growth has happened at the same time as that

PHOTO CREDIT: CASEY GROVES PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW ZEALAND POWERLIFTING, MELISSA MCGREGOR, KEITH MILLER

of other fitness trends including CrossFit," says Wilks. "Powerlifting movements are not as simple as you think but they are not as complex and speed-oriented as weightlifting movements," he says. "It's somewhat easier to achieve the basic technique, which means more people can do it."

"Powerlifting training is all about improving strength and technique," says Cauchi. "It strengthens muscles, improves posture and increases bone density if done right. However, the max-strength style of training involved in powerlifting may not be suitable for all populations. For those with a more general holistic goal, strength training should be integrated within a well-rounded approach to health that includes cardiovascular training."

"Being powerful is a vital ingredient in being healthy long term," says Strachan. "Powerlifting increases the metabolism and improves proprioception, which can help protect against injuries. If done correctly, it helps correct the loss of joint flexibility and positively affects bone density while improving general work capacity. Simply put, being strong can make life a hell of a lot easier."

While we may marvel at the elite powerlifter's seemingly superhuman strength and appreciate the work that goes into preparing for and contesting powerlifting events, this most extreme, yet highly accessible, strength sport can be adapted to meet the needs of most health conscious lifters. So are you ready to take the ultimate power challenge, as the elite world-beating lifters profiled in this article have? MF



"Being powerful is a vital ingredient in being healthy long term... Being strong can make life a hell of a lot easier."

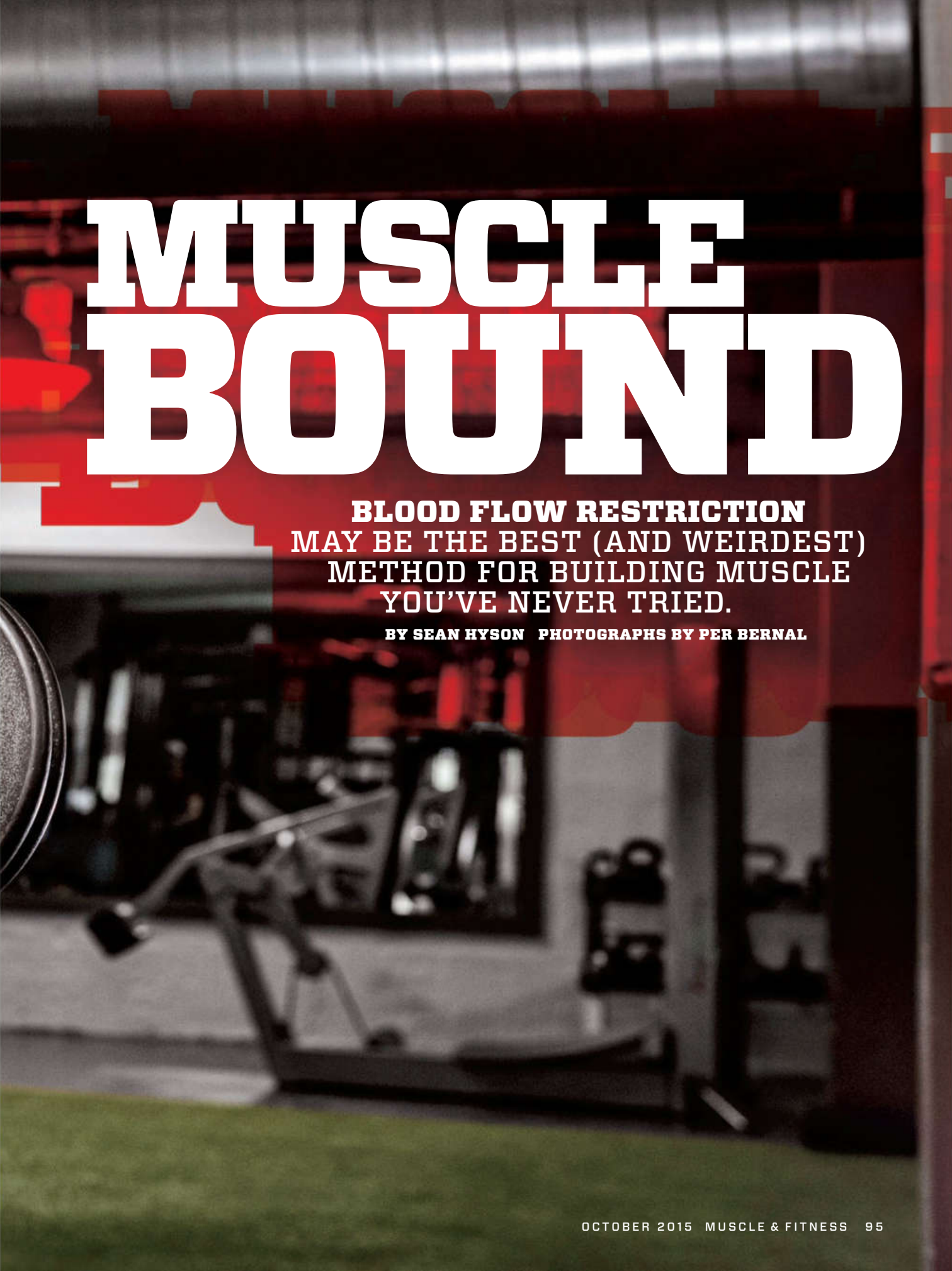
John Strachan proving that powerlifters can be lean and strong.


50
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MUSCLE BOUND

BLOOD FLOW RESTRICTION MAY BE THE BEST (AND WEIRDEST) METHOD FOR BUILDING MUSCLE YOU'VE NEVER TRIED.

BY SEAN HYSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY PER BERNAL





Steve Michalik, a former Mr America, once remarked that he'd eat grease from a crankcase if it would help him build muscle. We'd never ask you to go that far, but to take your gains to the next level, you have to be willing to try approaches that are unconventional, counterintuitive, and risk making you look funny in the gym. To that end, we propose you give blood flow restriction (BFR) training a shot. It entails tightly wrapping your limbs to reduce their blood supply while repping out with light weights.

Sound scary? At least we're not asking you to eat grease from a crankcase. (And, by the way, BFR is safe and works like a charm.)

THE POWER OF THE PUMP

Blood flow restriction training is a technique born in rehab clinics and has been used for decades. Olympic medalist skier Bode Miller even credited it in 2014 for helping him recover from a lower-back injury. It works like this: wrap a band or cuff – elastic knee or wrist wraps are great – around the upper arms or upper legs. Then perform several high-rep sets of a given exercise using light weights and short rest periods.

The wraps restrict blood flow to the extremities, reducing the amount that can be returned to the heart. As a result, more blood is trapped in the working muscles and they swell up – think: the best pump you've ever had. While the exact science behind BFR's effectiveness isn't clear, its leading researcher, Dr Jeremy Loenneke, assistant professor of exercise science at the University of Mississippi, US, thinks there are many factors at work. "It appears that cell swelling [the pump], metabolic accumulation [build-up of organic compounds that contribute to chemical reactions], and mechanical tension are playing a large role," says Dr Loenneke.

What is clear, however, is that blood flow restriction training works well. So well, in fact, it seems crazy not to try it. This year, a study in the *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports* found that subjects who followed a BFR lifting regimen for six weeks made muscle gains similar to a control group that followed a traditional workout protocol – but the BFR group increased strength by 10 percent versus seven percent for the control, even though it used lighter weights. Meanwhile, a review in the *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness* found that BFR training produces a range of metabolic and hormonal effects, many of which are associated with muscle growth, including elevations of growth hormone.

GROOMING BY CHRISTIE CAIOLA

"It usually requires two to three trials in order to find the sweet spot that achieves occlusion but isn't too painful or distracting."

Incredibly, BFR seems to spark gains even without the addition of weight training. Dr Loenneke says, "There's evidence that applying BFR and walking slowly may result in small but meaningful increases in muscle size and strength."

But is it safe? Will your arms turn blue and fall asleep while you're pressing a weight over your face? Not to worry, says Dr Loenneke. "The BFR stimulus is very [short term] – minutes, not hours. When we compare it with traditional resistance training, it appears just as safe, if not safer." However, if you have a vascular disease or disorder, it's probably best to leave matters of blood flow to your doctor.

TIE ONE ON

BFR training can be done with the squat, bench press, leg press, leg extension, leg curl, triceps press-down and various biceps curls. Pick up some wraps at *elitefts.com* or *roguefitness.com* and tie them on just under the shoulder or the crease of the hips, depending on which area of the body you're training. (If you don't have a partner to help you, wrapping your arms can be tricky. Pin one end of the wrap between your arm and your side, just below your armpit, then wind it around from there. Use your thumb to hold it in place while you make the next winding and tighten.)

Wrap tightly but don't try to mummify yourself. Now choose a light weight, about 30 percent of your max, and do one set of 30 reps. Rest 30-60 seconds and perform three more sets of 15 reps (resting the same time between each one). You'll know if you wrapped too tightly, or chose too heavy a load, if you can't complete the reps or get close.

If you're an iron veteran with the joint pain to show for it, BFR training will come as a blessing. Because it doesn't require heavy lifting, it won't aggravate any injuries. It can also provide the variety your workouts need to be more productive. To make the most of BFR, we recommend using it at the end of a normal workout, after heavier trainingis done. Follow the sample program here, courtesy of strength coach Bret Contreras, *bretcontreras.com*), for a guide on using BFR for fast muscle gains.

BFR TRAINING PLAN

TRAP IN THE GAINS WITH BFR

Perform each workout once per week. Exercises done with blood flow restriction are paired and marked "BFR". These are done as supersets and performed as follows: apply the wraps and do one set of 30 reps, then three sets of 15 reps. Use approximately 30 percent of your max weight for each set. For example, on Day I, you'll do a set of 30 reps on the lean-away leg extension, and then immediately do a set of the leg curl. Rest up to 30 seconds and repeat for sets of 15 reps. Do not remove the wraps until all four BFR sets are complete.



BARBELL HIP THRUST

Keep your core braced so your lower back doesn't overextend. If it's uncomfortable to hold the bar on your lap, wrap a towel around it (see the description over the page).

DAY 1

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Front squat	4	5
Good morning	3	6
Barbell hip thrust*	3	8
BFR lean-away leg extension**	4	See BFR Training Plan
SUPERSET WITH		
BFR lying leg curl	4	See BFR Plan

*Rest your upper back on a bench and sit on the floor perpendicular to it. Roll a loaded barbell into your lap and plant your feet close to your body with knees bent. Brace your abs and extend your hips by driving your heels into the floor.

**Set the back rest of a leg extension machine further back than you need so you can lean back 30 degrees or so when you perform the extension.

DAY 2

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Close-grip bench press	4	5
Weighted chin-up	3	3
Lateral raise	3	12
BFR dumbbell curl	4	See BFR Plan
SUPERSET WITH		
BFR rope triceps pressdown	4	See BFR Plan



FRONT SQUAT

Hold the bar on the front of your shoulders and squat as low as you can. As long as you keep your elbows pointing forward you'll be able to balance the bar.



GOOD MORNING

Set up as you would to do a back squat. Bend your hips back as far as you can and lower your torso as far as you can without losing the arch in your lower back. Squeeze your glutes to come back up, pushing through your heels on the ascent.



BFR SEATED LEG EXTENSION

Be conservative on your weight selection. The tightness of the wraps will bring fatigue more quickly.



DAY 3

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Squat	4	8
Deadlift	3	4
Reverse lunge	2	8
BFR leg extension	4	See BFR Training Plan
SUPERSET WITH		
BFR seated leg curl	4	See BFR Plan

DEADLIFT

Stand with feet inside shoulder width and grasp the bar just outside your knees. Keep your lower back in its natural arch as you extend your hips.



BFR DUMBBELL CURL

Tie the wrap high around your upper arm and perform a normal dumbbell curl, squeezing your biceps hard in the peak position.

DAY 4

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Incline bench press	4	8
Chest-supported row*	3	10
Cable lateral raise	3	8
BFR EZ-bar curl	4	See BFR Plan
SUPERSET WITH		
BFR V-Bar Triceps Pressdown	4	See BFR Plan

*Set an adjustable bench at a 45- to 60-degree angle and lie on it chestdown. Row dumbbells to your sides.



BFR V-BAR TRICEPS PRESSDOWN

Move your elbows back as you lower the weight and let them drift forward to lift.

INCLINE BENCH PRESS

Set the bench to a 30-to 45-degree angle. Lower the bar to the upper third of your chest and keep your forearms vertical. M&F



THE STRAIGHT UP SERIES

TRICEPS

Trouble filling out your T-shirts? Add some beef to your arms with this punishing triceps routine.



BY JOE WUEBBEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PER BERNAL



SEATED DUMBBELL OVERHEAD EXTENSION

You can go pretty heavy on these, but always make sure to establish a strong mind-muscle connection with your triceps to make each rep count.

ONE OF THE MANY TRENDS in fitness these days is for every workout to have a clearly stated "functional" purpose. For example, Monday is lower-body pure strength and core stability, Tuesday is upper-body pull and gymnastics skill work, and so on. Fine. Even though we historically set trends at *M&F,* we'll play along and follow one for a change.

Today, the objectives are upper-body push strength, triceps hypertrophy and carving out a badass pair of horseshoes. Clear enough? How about functional? Those who say no have probably never had a decent set of triceps. This workout will get you headed in that direction with classic no-nonsense exercises and an equitable blend of heavy weight/low reps and light weight/high reps, plus intensity-boosting dropsets and rest-pauses that will leave your triceps with no option but to grow.





CABLE PUSHDOWN

Keep the elbows in tight here and your technique strict. With rep counts at eight, the weight should be fairly heavy. But if you're not able to reach full elbow extension (lockout) on each rep, lighten the weight a bit. Squeeze the peak contraction for one second at the bottom of the movement.



BENCH DIP

A slight flaring of the elbows is OK here, since you're looking to achieve a high volume of reps. That said, keep your mental focus on your triceps to ensure a high degree of isolation.



CLOSE-GRIP BENCH PRESS

Don't go too light on these; try and hit six reps at failure on every set. The strength you gain on this compound movement will promote triceps growth and carry over to all the pressing exercises you do for chest and shoulders.

THE WORKOUT
TRICEPS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
Close-grip bench press	4	6	2 min.
Bench dip *Straight set/ dropset/ rest-pause*	3	See below*	2 min.
Overhead extension	3	8	1–2 min.
Cable pushdown	2	15–20	1–2 min.

***1st set (straight set):** with two weight plates on your lap, do as many reps as possible (to failure).

2nd set (dropset): go to failure with two plates on your lap, then immediately take one plate off and rep out to failure again. Do one more dropset by taking the other plate off your lap and repping to failure.

3rd set (rest-pause): using body weight only, rep out to failure, then rest 10 to 20 seconds and go to failure again. Rest 10 to 20 seconds, and rep out to failure one last time. M&F

SUPPS

THIS MONTH IN SUPPLEMENT NEWS



Test boosters

Train hard, eat clean and take the right supplements to keep T levels high. BY RAZVAN RADU

PAVEL YTHJALL

TESTOSTERONE'S IMPORTANCE to the male body can't be overstated if you want to keep your sex and gym lives healthy. The hormone plays a key role in both building lean muscle mass and maintaining a healthy reproductive system. Take a look at this compilation of proven test-boosting ingredients to see how they can help you keep your test levels in top shape.



		INGREDIENTS				
		FENUGREEK EXTRACT	CAESALPINIA BENTHAMIANA	D-ASPARTIC ACID	TRIBULUS	ZINC
		Studies show fenugreek extract boosts testosterone levels through its high saponin content. Saponins are chemical compounds that have been shown to boost bioavailable testosterone.	This is an African tropical plant extract known for its ability to increase T and sex drive. The plant extract works by elevating both libido and nitric oxide production in the body.	The amino acid functions by inducing luteinising hormone secretion in the brain. This function is key in stimulating both testosterone and protein synthesis, keeping T high and helping your body stay in an anabolic state.	Tribuluss is thought to boost T through two methods: through high saponin content and by increasing luteinising hormone. A 2012 study found that tribulus improved libido and fatigue, plus increased testosterone by 16 percent.	The essential mineral supports healthy T levels and is crucial for healthy eyesight and maintenance of an overall healthy body. Get at least the minimum recommended dose to keep T levels optimal.
SUPPLEMENTS	APS Tribulus 1500				X	
	BPI Sports A-HD Elite		X			X
	EPIQ Quad Test				X	X
	Novex Biotech TestroVax	X		X		
	Performix Super T	X			X	X
	ProSupps Fenumass	X				X

Real powerful

MESOMORPH V2.0 is a pre-workout that's much more than a stimulant.

BY RAZVAN RADU



AFTER A LONG DAY AT work, how many times have you reached for your pre-workout, taken a scoop, or even two, only to get to the gym and feel absolutely nothing? No energy, no pump.

The culprit of decreased sensitivity to pre-workouts is often the fact that many pre-workouts depend on stimulants the body can easily adapt to. Look no further than the average coffee drinker; after a while, the caffeine doesn't invigorate, it merely helps the coffee drinker feel normal.

You want to look past stimulants for ingredients to increase strength and blood flow, and Mesomorph V2.0 delivers.

Mesomorph V2.0, from APS Nutrition, starts off with beta-alanine, a carnosine-boosting amino acid. Beta-alanine is proven to significantly increase carnosine, which allows for a delayed fatigue response and a quicker recovery.

Next in line are the pump inducers L-citrulline and L-arginine AKG. These two amino acids increase nitric oxide and blood flow, delivering an excess of nutrients to muscles and allowing you to achieve much quicker growth and recovery.

The cell volumiser matrix includes taurine and creatine. Creatine has been shown to increase muscle mass, strength and overall energy through elevated ATP levels, while taurine aids in both pump and allowing quicker recovery.

And yes, Mesomorph V2.0 also delivers a stimulant kick through caffeine and theobromine, a compound found in cocoa beans that also helps dilate blood vessels.



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APS NUTRITION
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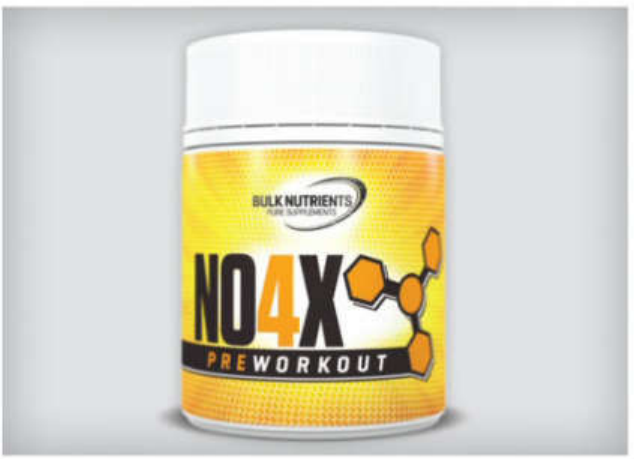


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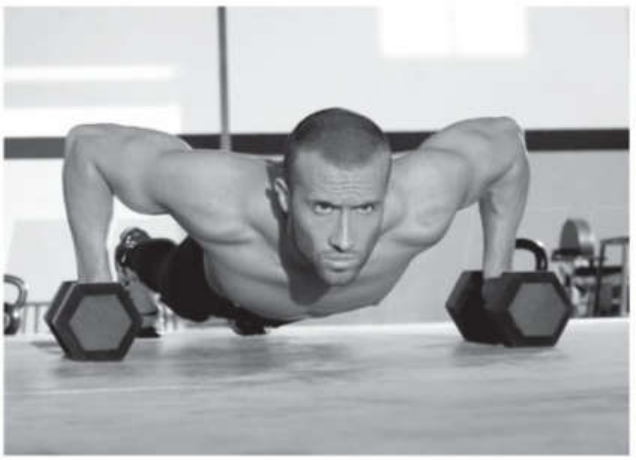
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METAL OF HONOUR
Adding plates to the bar doesn't always mean you're improving.

The ultimate goal

Finding the true answer can be backbreaking. BY SEAN HYSON

THERE WAS A TIME when I thought pretty much all of life's problems could be solved by deadlifts. Stressed out at work? Squeeze the life out of that bar. Girl trouble? Hit a PR tonight; that'll show her. Strength and improvement, particularly on that one exercise, were central to my identity, and whichever direction my deadlift was going almost single-handedly determined how I felt about the direction in my life, too.

The relentless pursuit of gains had an unexpected result: losses. I hurt my back, and I finally had to confront a hard question: what do you do when the solution becomes the problem?

My blanket answer for everything, my go-to fixer-upper, and the one thing in my life I'd come to rely on was suddenly not only the wrong response but the absolute worst thing I could do. Naturally, at first I reacted with panic and despair, but eventually, I found my way to common sense.

Your strength, physique and health cannot be defined by one quality or weighed via a single metric. If you can't deadlift 250 kilos but you can do 180 on a hip thrust, I don't think anyone can call you a wuss bag. If your abs aren't as sharp this summer as they were last, but you feel better than you ever have, what are you really missing out on?

Nowadays, I do back-friendlier deadlift variations and chase PRs a little more cautiously. And I recognise that gains on a lift are just numbers, after all, and not necessarily indicative of real growth.

Self-improvement is the goal.

SEAN HYSON
is *M&F*'s training director.
Follow him on Twitter:
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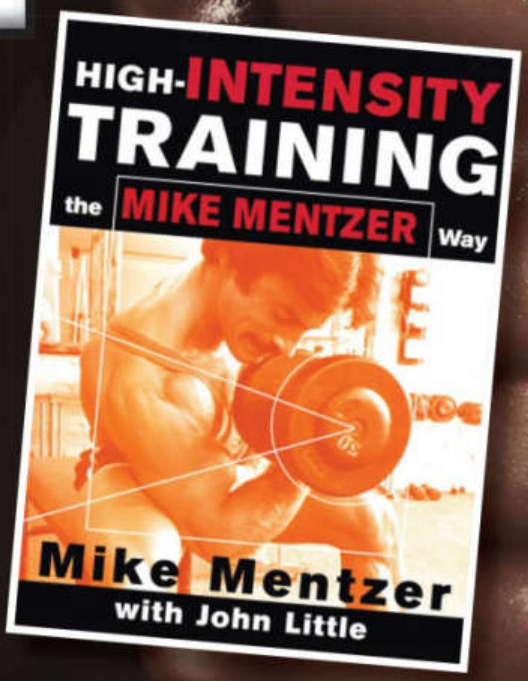
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